AN UNTITLED

BARBRA STREISAND FILM

Based on

YENTL, THE YESHIVA BOY

by Isaac Bashevis Singer

Screenplay
by Barbra Streisand
Revised
by Jack Rosenthal

Lyrics
by Marilyn and Alan Bergman

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1 EXT. STREETS OF YANEV, POLAND, 1902 A SUMMER MORNING

A BIRD is perched on the crucifix of a church steeple. In the distance, we hear a tapping sound and the voice of the SHAMMES, calling men to the synagogue:

SHAMMES
Am kodesh! Time for morning prayers!
Morning prayers! Am Kodesh!

In the marketplace below, wagons are rolling up, PEASANTS unloading their carts, setting up stalls. MUSICIANS are tuning their instruments - a clarinet, a cello, a tsimbal.

The village has awakened. MEN, greeting each other, sleepily, automatically, walk towards the wooden synagogue in the square. Some wear prayer-shawls. WOMEN, carrying shopping baskets, walk in the opposite direction towards the market.

The BIRD watches, then swoops down. We follow the SHAMMES as he taps on shutters and fences, repeating his call. Out of the house he's just passed, comes REB MENDEL, wrapping his prayer-shawl around him and coughing a little. As he starts down the street, a young woman appears in his doorway. This is YENTL.

YENTL
Papa!

REB MENDEL stops and turns. She gestures to him to wrap his collar more firmly around his throat. He does so - with a little irritation at being fussed. She smiles acknowledgement of her obeyed order. He goes on his way.

YENTL watches the MEN and BOYS going one way, and the WOMEN and GIRLS going the other. Even a COCK going one way and a HEN the other.

We follow the SHAMMES, as he leads the CAMERA into ---

2 INT. SYNAGOGUE CONTINOUS

--- where MEN are reciting prayers. The CAMERA finally settles on REB MENDEL in profile, his eyes closed in prayer. Behind him, framed in the window, we see YENTL watching the service intently. REB MENDEL coughs, opens his eyes, turns to see YENTL's face just as it drops from sight.

He sighs; coughs; shakes his head.

3 EXT. SYNAGOGUE CONTINUOUS

YENTL slips down the pile of logs she was standing on. She glances round guiltily. Then, satisfied she hasn't been seen, sets off to market with her basket.

4 EXT. STREET DAY

The BIRD is drinking from a puddle in the muddy street. YENTL approaches, puts her hand out to it. It flies off. She watches it soar in the sky, then sighs and goes on her way.

5 EXT. FISH STALL MARKETPLACE CONTINUOUS

Live fish swim in tubs, while "sleeping fish" are laid out in boxes with ice and salt. MRS KOVNER, the fish-pedlar, is wrapping fish for a customer. Another customer, MRS SHAEMEN, is teaching her young daughter how to choose good fish.

MRS SHAEMEN
Very important about the skin ... The skin must be tight ... firm ...

DAUGHTER
(memorising)
Firm.

MRS SHAEMEN
The scales must be shiny like diamonds.

DAUGHTER
Diamonds.

YENTL enters, disinterestedly.

MRS KOVNER
Morning, Yentl. How's Papa?

YENTL
A little better, Mrs Kovner, thankyou.

MRS SHAEMEN
(simultaneously with above)
The flesh ... you give it a press
(does so)
- it bounces back.

DAUGHTER
Back.

MRS SHAEMEN
And then there's the smell ...
(smells fish with immense pleasure)
... like a bouquet of flowers.

DAUGHTER
Flowers.

YENTL
Would you pick one out for me, Mrs Kovner?

5 Continued

MRS KOVNER
Of course, darling, herring or carp?

YENTL
Whatever.

MRS KOVNER
A nice herring.

MRS SHAEMEN puts her fish in her basket and pays.

MRS SHAEMEN
So, tell me, Yentl ... did I hear you finally got engaged?

YENTL
You tell me, Mrs Shaemen

MRS SHAEMEN
What do you mean? Did you or didn't you?

YENTL
What - hear it or do it?

MRS KOVNER laughs MRS SHAEMEN s smile fades; she turns to OTHER CUSTOMERS

MRS SHAEMEN
She can joke about finding a husband at her age- why should I worry?

She and her DAUGHTER leave MRS KOVNER shows YENTL a herring

MRS KOVNER
There, darling So beautiful it can cook itself, believe me

YENTL
Mrs Kovner, from your mouth to God's ear

She looks to heaven for confirmation She lifts her outer skirt pulls coins from the pocket of her petticoat, pays and leaves

6 EXT. MARKETPLACE CONTINUOUS

YENTL walks past a line of stalls. As she does so ---

WOMAN PEDLAR
(calling)
Yentl! Did you hear about Hannah Schiffman running off with a blacksmith from Riga?

YENTL
(over her shoulder)
I think I did, yes

6 Continued

WOMAN PEDLAR
(as Yentl walks on)
I'll tell you next time. Remind me.

YENTL stops by a seated BEGGAR, reaches into her pocket again and gives him a coin.

A string of SMALL BOYS, between the ages of 3 and 5, pass by, each holding onto each others' coats, the first of them holding on to his TEACHER's. Like a bevy of baby ducklings. The CAMERA follows them, leading us to ---

7 EXT. BOOKSTALL CONTINUOUS

A horse-drawn cart filled with books. Even the horse has book-filled canvas bags slung over its back. TWO YESHIVA STUDENTS are browsing through books. FIRST STUDENT beckons the other to him.

1ST STUDENT
(showing him a book)
This is the one I was telling you about. The first part's about the ancient mystics and the philosophy of language. The second's full of Midrashim about the creation of Life - with 25 interpretations of each story. Some make you laugh - some turn your hair grey overnight. It's a marvellous book.
(puts book back)
Don't buy it, though. It's in the Rabbi's library.

During this, YENTL has approached and has been watching them intently. She watches them wander away. She looks towards the book.

BOOKSELLER
You're in the wrong place, miss.

YENTL
(turning, deep in thought)
What?

BOOKSELLER
These are sacred books. Books for women are over there.

The STUDENTS leave. YENTL picks up the book they were admiring.

YENTL
I'd like to buy this one please.

He grabs it from her.

7 Continued

BOOKSELLER
Sacred books are for men!

YENTL
Why?

BOOKSELLER
"Why?"!
(chuckles; turns to Old Man seated on a box)
She wants to know why!

OLD MAN
It's the Law, that's why.

YENTL
Where is it written?

OLD MAN
Never mind where! The Law's the Law!

YENTL
So it must be written somewhere.
(grabs the book back from bookseller)
Maybe in here. I'll take it.

BOOKSELLER
Miss. Do me a favour. Do yourself a favour. Buy a nice picture book. Girls like picture books.

YENTL
What if I told you it's for my father?

BOOKSELLER
Your father? So why didn't you say? Fifteen kopeks. And if you want to know where that's written - it's inside the cover!

She pays him and goes on her way.

8 EXT. MARKETPLACE CONTINUOUS

TWO SOLDIERS, on horseback, are moving through the square. ONE of them leans across as he passes a stall and spears an apple with his sword. The OTHER eyes YENTL as he rides beside her. He reaches down and grabs hold of her bottom.

SOLDIER
Hey! A nice piece of kosher meat!

YENTL
What would you know from kosher? Pig!

He rides on, laughing. YENTL watches him go with defiant eyes.

REB MENDEL (V.O.)
And who is mighty?

DAVID (V.O.)
He who turns an enemy into a friend.

9 INT. REB MENDEL'S STUDY LATER

C.U. DAVID, a thirteen year-old student.

REB MENDEL (V.O.)
And who is wise?

2-SHOT: DAVID, earnestly struggling for the answer, REB MENDEL watching him.

DAVID
He who ...

10 INT. REB MENDEL'S KITCHEN CONTINUOUS

We see the herring burning in a pan on the stove. YENTL,wearing an apron, is engrossed in her new book. The table's a mess. Through the large doorway, we see REB MENDEL and DAVID at a table strewn with books.

REB MENDEL
He who what?

DAVID
He who ... he who ...

YENTL
(to herself, almost without thinking)
He who learns from all men.

DAVID
He who learns from all men.

REB MENDEL
Good. And who is rich?

YENTL
(as before)
He who is content with what he has.

DAVID
(simultaneously)
Um ... he who has a full heart.

REB MENDEL
Yes. Also he who is content with what he has.
(sniffs, looks towards the kitchen)
Yentl. The house is on fire again.

Lethargically - and without taking her eyes from her book - YENTL shakes the pan a little on the STOVE. CUT TO LIVING ROOM.

DAVID
How can one question have two answers?

REB MENDEL
David, sometimes there are so many answers, you're sorry you asked the question!
(coughs a little)
So. The last one. "Who is a hero"?

DAVID
He who ...

YENTL
He who controls his passions.

DAVID
(looking up; did he hear something?)
He who ...

YENTL
He who controls his passions.

DAVID
(losing concentration)
He who ...

REB MENDEL
Concentrate, David.

YENTL
(louder)
Controls his passions!

DAVID looks towards YENTL, then to REB MENDEL, bewildered.

DAVID
Yentl studies the Talmud?

REB MENDEL
(closing the book)
I think that's enough for today.

DAVID
I thought women who study are supposed to be monsters ...!

REB MENDEL
We live in a very small house and my Yentl has very big ears.

DAVID's still staring towards the kitchen.

Take your books, David. See you next week.

DAVID collects his books .. and starts to back out of the door.

DAVID
(staring at the kitchen)
Goodbye, Reb Mendal.
(calling)
Goodbye, Yentl.

YENTL
Goodbye, David.

DAVID exits. REB MENDEL starts lighting his pipe. YENTL enters from the kitchen, dishevelled and dusted with flour. REB MENDEL looks at her askance.

REB MENDEL
Not only big ears ...

YENTL
(taking the pipe from him)
You shouldn't be smoking. Thankyou.

She takes a surreptitious puff on the pipe. Then takes a vial from her apron pocket - pours medicine into a spoon.

REB MENDEL
You're blessed with brains, but not with patience.

YENTL
Open, please.

REB MENDEL
In the first place, the Angel of Death isn't scared of cough medicine. In the second place, I think he's beginning to like it.

He opens his mouth; she spoons medicine in.

Suddenly he sniffs. She sniffs. They look at each other. YENTL runs to the kitchen. He follows. Smoke fills the kitchen. YENTL beats it away from the pan on the stove. They both stand looking down at the blackened, burnt fish.

YENTL
Mrs Kovner told me the herring would cook itself ...

REB MENDEL
It's a pity she didn't tell the herring.

11 INT. REB MENDEL'S DINING ROOM LATER

The remains of the meal are on the table. The burnt herring is now just a skeleton. The challah is a gouged-out shell of dough.

11 REB MENDEL at chess board. He is eating a burnt baked apple as he plays. YENTL is behind a curtain - in the ALCOVE - taking off her apron.

REB MENDEL
You know something? Baked apple is good -- a little burnt ...

YENTL emerges from alcove.

YENTL
I'm sory, Papa.

REB MENDEL
I mean it. You baked it right.

YENTL
(glances at the bread)
More than you can say for the bread.

REB MENDEL
So, it didn't rise. Terrible thing.

YENTL
Maybe if I'd lit the oven ...

REB MENDEL
Alright, let's do something you are good at. Close the shutters, we'll study the Talmud.

YENTL happily jumps up, starts closing the shutters.

YENTL
Aren't we being hypocritical, Papa? If we don't have to hide it from God, then why from neighbours?

REB MENDEL
Because I trust God will understand. I'm not so sure about the neighbours.

He watches her choosing the book from the overflowing shelves.

YENTL
Papa. Where is it written that women can't read sacred books?

REB MENDEL
Some things don't have to be written.

YENTL
Then why --

REB MENDEL
Yentl. Please. A thousand times you start the same argument. A thousand times I tell you - it's different for men and women ...

YENTL
Why?

REB MENDEL
Always "why"! You know why, Yentl!

YENTL
Papa --

She sits down with the book. He looks at her fondly.

REB MENDEL
Ever since you were little - questions, questions. You have the soul of a man, Yentl.

YENTL
So why was I born a woman?

REB MENDEL
Again "why"!
(looks heavenward, sighs)
Ask Him - it was His idea.

YENTL laughs, hands him the book. He turns to a page. She notices how tired he is.

YENTL
Maybe I'm a little too tired tonight, Papa. Do you mind? We'll study tomorrow.

He understands what she's doing. Smiles.

REB MENDEL
You're such a comfort to me, but you should have a young man to take care of you - preferably one who doesn't like to eat. Goodnight.

He kisses her and goes to his bedroom. YENTL waits for a moment, then gets his hat and prayer-shawl from a table. Tries on the hat - studies herself in the mirror. Then puts it down, delicately removes the prayer-shawl from its bag and puts it on. MUSIC begins, echoing the melody we heard in the synagogue. The SONG begins VOICE OVER.

YENTL
Please God, keep him well.

YENTL (V.O.)
THERE'S NOT A MORNING I BEGIN WITHOUT
A THOUSAND QUESTIONS RUNNING THROUGH MY MIND:
THAT I DON'T TRY TO FIND THE REASON
AND THE LOGIC IN THE WORLD THAT GOD DESIGNED.
THE REASON WHY A BIRD WAS GIVEN WINGS,
IF NOT TO FLY.
AND PRAISE THE SKY WITH EV'RY SONG IT SINGS.
WHAT'S RIGHT OR WRONG?
WHERE I BELONG WITHIN THE SCHEME OF THINGS?

She tiptoes to REB MENDEL's bedroom door. Opens it and peeps in to see if he's asleep.

YENTL (V.O.) - Continued
AND WHY HAVE EYES THAT SEE AND ARMS THAT REACH UNLESS
YOU'RE MEANT TO KNOW THERE'S SOMETHING MORE?
IF NOT TO HUNGER FOR THE MEANING OF IT ALL,
THEN TELL ME WHAT A SOUL IS FOR?
WHY HAVE WINGS UNLESS YOU'RE MEANT TO FLY?
AND TELL ME PLEASE WHY HAVE A MIND IF NOT TO QUESTION WHY?

She takes off the prayer-shawl and puts it back in its bag. She starts to sing LIVE:

AND TELL ME WHERE - WHERE IS IT WRITTEN WHAT IT IS
I'M MEANT TO BE?
THAT I CAN'T DARE TO HAVE THE CHANCE TO PICK THE FRUIT
OFF EV'RY TREE?
OR HAVE MY SHARE OR EV'RY SWEET-IMAGINED POSSIBILITY
JUST TELL ME WHERE, TELL ME WHERE.

She starts to clear the dishes and take them to the kitchen. She takes them to the sink.

IF I WAS ONLY MEANT TO TEND THE NEST, THEN WHY DOES MY
IMAGINATION SAIL?
ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS AND THE SEAS BEYOND THE MAKE-BELIEVE
OF ANY FAIRY-TALE?
WHY HAVE THE THIRST IF NOT TO DRINK THE WINE?
AND WHAT A WASTE TO HAVE A TASTE OF THINGS THAT CAN'T BE MINE
AND TELL ME WHERE - WHERE IS IT WRITTEN WHAT IT IS I'M MEANT
TO BE?
THAT I CAN'T DARE TO FIND THE MEANINGS IN THE MORNINGS THAT
I SEE?
OR HAVE MY SHARE OF EV'RY SWEET-IMAGINED POSSIBILITY?
JUST TELL ME WHERE - OR IF IT'S WRITTEN ANYWHERE!

By the end of the song, YENTL has put on her glasses, sat down and started peering through her book trying to find the answers.

12 EXT. STREET IN YANEV DAY

From across the road, we see MR. GITTELMAN, the matchmaker. He's talking to MR TIPPLE, a tanner.

GITTELMAN
I'm offering you a marriage made in heaven! With Rachel's goats and your chickens - Paradise!

TIPPLE
Is she beautiful, this Rachel?

GITTELMAN
Listen, I'm a matchmaker, not Michelangelo.
(shrugs)
Her goats are beautiful.

YENTL and REB MENDEL pass by on their way to the synagogue. They exchange greetings with OTHERS. REB MENDEL leans a little on YENTL's arm as they walk.

REB MENDEL
Yentl?

YENTL
Papa?

REB MENDEL
I pick up my prayer-shawl this morning - it's not folded properly.

YENTL
Oh.

REB MENDEL
You wear a man's garment, Yentl, you not only deceive others, you deceive yourself. It perplexes the soul. And that is written - so no argument.

MR GITTELMAN catches up with them.

MR GITTELMAN
Reb Mendel! Excuse me!

YENTL and REB MENDEL turn and stop.

REB MENDEL
Yes, Mr Gittelman?

GITTELMAN
(beams)
I have a match for Yentl.

YENTL
Again?

REB MENDEL
Good. Good.

YENTL
Who's the unlucky man?

GITTELMAN
(as though announcing royalty)
Benzar Berkowitz!

REB MENDEL
The widower?

YENTL
(sighs)
The shoemaker.
(to Gittelman)
I don't know anything about shoes. What would we ever talk about?

GITTELMAN
With respect, Yentl, please don't interfere in matters that don't concern you, thankyou.
(to Reb Mendel)
"What would we talk about?" she says! He works all day, sleeps all night. Who has time to talk?

YENTL
With respect, Mr Gittelman, conducting business on the Sabbath is forbidden.

She propels an amused REB MENDEL towards the synagogue.

REB MENDEL
Not matchmaking. Matchmaking is the one business that isn't forbidden. It's God's business ...

GITTELMAN
(calling after them)
I'll arrange everything. What can I do? I like to make people happy ...!

13 INT. BENZAR'S LIVING ROOM DAY

The CAMERA pans along a row of frosty, intimidating faces - those of BENZAR's family. They are his BROTHER, middle-aged TWIN SISTERS, THREE CHILDREN (picking their noses) and a BABY.

GITTELMAN (O.S.)
So now we proceed. Benzar's brother ... his sisters ... his poor, motherless children ... and Benzar himself!

BENZAR, who is very small and middle-aged, is standing at the end of the row - wearing a shoe on his hand. He wears a shoemaker's apron, and - like everyone else - is surrounded by piles of shoes. He bows.

GITTELMAN stands in the middle of the room. YENTL stands opposite BENZAR and his FAMILY.

GITTELMAN
And <u>this</u> ... well, this is Yentl.

YENTL smiles thinly. The OTHERS simply stare at her.

GITTELMAN
So now we proceed. The marriage papers.

He hands the papers to BENZAR, who hands them to his BROTHER.

Yentl's father can sign when I take her home. Coming here would've been a long walk for him.

GITTELMAN (Cont)
(beams at everyone)
So. So now we proceed.
(turns to Yentl)
Sit down, Yentl.
(she does so)
Head up, hands folded.
(she does so)
Thankyou.

He looks at her nervously. She looks at him defiantly. He grows more nervous ... girds his loins for the ordeal.

So, Yentl, what can I tell you of Benzar? A hard worker, a dutiful father and - until his dear wife passed away - may she rest in peace --

ENTIRE FAMILY
May she rest in peace.

GITTELMAN
- a devoted husband.

1ST SISTER
She used to say he always made her feel ten feet tall.

YENTL
I'm sure.

GITTELMAN
Now, Benzar. What can I tell you of Yentl? Yentl is a model of domestic virtue! She keeps a spotless home for her dear father. Her cooking, I'm told, is exceptional.

The FAMILY beams.

2ND SISTER
Your favourite recipe, Yentl?

YENTL
Umm ... I have no favourites.

GITTELMAN
(effusively)
Meaning they're all of equal quality?

YENTL
That's one way of putting it.

1ST SISTER
Your fish?

YENTL
Like nothing you've ever tasted.

BROTHER
Excellent!

GITTELMAN
(nervously)
So now we proceed?

BROTHER
Of course! For is it not written that we must never put off till tomorrow what we can do today!

YENTL
Where's that written??

GITTELMAN
(quietly, tensely)
Yentl ... ssshhhh!

1ST SISTER
It's on a dish-towel in Benzar's kitchen. In a green cross-stitch.
(to 2nd Sister)
It is the green, isn't it?

GITTELMAN
(to Yentl)
See! You're marrying a scholar!

They all pat BENZAR on the back.

YENTL
On the other hand, I read a proverb in a Hebrew book that says never make a decision before you've weighed both sides of the argument.

GITTELMAN
(apprehensively)
Yentl!

1ST SISTER
(scandalised)
She read it in a Hebrew book??

2ND SISTER
(horrified)
She reads Hebrew??

YENTL
And there's probably another that says don't believe everything you read on a dish-towel.

A terrible silence. Broken only by the sound of the BROTHER tearing up the marriage papers. GITTELMAN's head drops in his hands. YENTL beams at them all innocently.

REB MENDEL (V.O.)
Why, Yentl, why?

14 EXT. REB MENDEL'S GARDEN LATE AFTERNOON

YENTL and REB MENDEL sit together near a tall TREE. REB MENDEL is looking more frail than when we last saw him, and he's wrapped up like an invalid.

YENTL
"Why?"! Now I've got you doing it!

REB MENDEL
You couldn't sit nice and quiet?

YENTL
I don't understand. This man quotes a dish-towel and gets a pat on the back - I quote from a book and I'm in disgrace!

REB MENDEL
(sighing)
All I know is I want you to marry.

YENTL
A little shoemaker? A very little shoe-maker?

REB MENDEL
I want you to be happy.

YENTL
(soberly)
I am happy I don't want to get married, Papa.

REB MENDEL
I notice.

YENTL
I don't want to just bear children and darn my husband's socks.

REB MENDEL
What is it you want? A husband who'll darn your socks?

YENTL
Interesting.

REB MENDEL
And bear your children?

YENTL is silent.

What's to become of you, Yentl? Believe me, you turn the world inside

REB MENDEL (Cont)
out and upside down, you'll never know a minute's peace.

YENTL
Papa ---

REB MENDEL
Children are more important than the Talmud. Much more. Without children, the Talmud dies with old men. When they die.

She looks at him sharply.

YENTL
You won't die. I won't let you

REB MENDEL
And saying that is a sin!

YENTL
I'm sorry.

REB MENDEL
(nods heavenwards)
To Him, not to me

YENTL
(to heaven)
Sorry

A pause

REB MENDEL
It's me who's sorry. It's all my fault. You're already a woman, and I've taught you nothing of how to be one. A foolish man, eh?

She kneels beside him. Looks into his eyes.

YENTL
A great man. You taught me everything I know.

REB MENDEL
Too much you know! Too much but not enough.

YENTL
(smiles)
Don't be sorry, Papa. I'm not.

He strokes her hair. Looks at the TREE.

REB MENDEL
That tree ... That tree was this high -
(indicates with his hand)
- when your brother Anshel died ... may

REB MENDEL (Cont)
he rest in peace. You - you were a baby. Couldn't even talk - let alone ask "why".
(Yentl smiles)
And now, look how tall.
(he looks at her)
Too late to tell you to play with dolls, eh?
(a pause)
Maybe Benzar <u>is</u> a little too little. Especially here.
(taps his head)
What <u>would</u> you talk about?

YENTL
I love you, Papa.

REB MENDEL
So. If I can't find you a bigger shoe-maker - with smarter dish-towels - it looks like all you've got is me.

She kisses him. He looks up into the sky.

Hear me, O Lord, Master of the Universe. You have given me a daughter who brings me great pride and pleasure, and for this kindness I thank thee for ever and ever.
(beat)
May God forgive me.

The CAMERA moves up the TREE. The LEAVES tremble. The SUN sets and the light fades. The CAMERA moves back down and we are now --

15 EXT. CEMETERY DAY

Beside REB MENDEL's grave. A RABBI and MEN stand around the coffin YENTL stands to one side. A hunch-backed CARETAKER stands waiting at the side as the last shovel of earth falls into the grave and onto the coffin.

The RABBI goes to YENTL and tears her coat lapel. She tears it a little more, herself.

The RABBI looks at the MEN.

RABBI
Who will say Kaddish?

YENTL
I will.

They ALL look at her in disbelief.

RABBI
It has to be a man, Yentl. <u>A male</u> relative.

YENTL
Tears are tears - whether a daughter's or a son's.

She starts to recite the HEBREW PRAYER OF MOURNING. In the background, the MEN mutter: "Have you ever seen?" ... "God forgive her ... such a thing!" ... "It's the heartbreak ... the mind is ... who knows?"

16 INT. REB MENDEL'S LIVING ROOM DAY

The SCREEN is black until a WOMAN'S HAND lifts what is a black cloth covering a mirror. We see YENTL's reflection - seated on a wooden box. MRS SHAEMEN is cleaning the house; TWO OTHERS are taking books from the shelves and tying string round them. Bundles of Reb Mendel's clothes are similarly bound.

1ST WOMAN
(whispering)
I just hope she got a good price for all this. You sell a house - you bargain.

MRS SHAEMEN
(whispering)
You know Yentl - one nod of the head - all sold.

1ST WOMAN
Still, the new bride will be happy. A nice garden.

2ND WOMAN
Perfect. According to Mr Gittelman, she has beautiful goats ...

MRS SHAEMEN
And Yentl will also be happy. My house is hers as long as she wants. So she'll help with the store a little ... and the children ... maybe do the washing ... until a nice young man comes along, please God. By then she'll be what I call a housewife ...

MRS KOVNER enters from the kitchen with a bowl of soup.

MRS KOVNER
Yentl, eat.
(Yentl shakes her head)
Yentl - enough. We mourn for seven days. After that life goes on.

YENTL accordingly takes the soup and has a spoonful.

2ND WOMAN
(taking down more books)
So many. Collecting dust ...

She accidentally drops one to the floor. YENTL leaps to her feet, spilling her soup everywhere. She picks up the book, kisses it and holds it to her chest. MRS KOVNER goes to her, puts her arm round her. MRS SHAEMEN, meanwhile, is on her knees mopping up the soup.

MRS KOVNER
The study house will be a good home for them. Young men will read them for years.
(to other women)
I think maybe we come back later.

MRS SHAEMEN
(to Yentl)
And then you come home with me. You'll clean up the soup first, yes?

MRS KOVNER ushers the WOMEN out. Smiles at YENTL, who nods and smiles her thanks. Left alone, she goes to a pile of her father's clothes and takes from it his prayer-shawl bag. She takes the prayer-shawl out, folds it neatly and puts it back in, then picks up his yarmulka and takes that and the shawl to --

17 INT. YENTL'S BEDROOM CONTINUOUS

YENTL goes to the mirror. Stares at herself for a long moment. Then slowly opens a drawer and takes out a sewing box. Inside is a pair of scissors. She feels the prayer-shawl, then the yarmulka reverently, then picks up the scissors.

YENTL
Forgive me, Papa.

She starts to cut her hair.

18 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE ALMOST NIGHT

A deserted country road. A WAGON turns down it. As it passes, we follow it. We see a small figure of a MAN trudging along the road - his back to us. He wears black clothes and a cap. He hails the wagon. It stops.

DRIVER
Well?

MAN
Can I ride a few miles?

We now see the MAN from the front. It's YENTL.

DRIVER
You got money?

YENTL
A little.

She hands him some coins.

DRIVER
(nods behind him)
In the back.

YENTL goes to the back of the wagon. Already in there are TWO BOYS, A GIRL, A PIGLET and A GOOSE. YENTL's about to clamber in, hoisting her bag with her, when - with a sudden cry from the DRIVER - the horse starts off again and the wagon lurches off down the road - to the accompaniment of the DRIVER's laughter and that of the BOYS and GIRL.

DRIVER
I don't give rides to Jew-boys!

YENTL stands watching the wagon's rear light swinging in the enveloping darkness, growing smaller and smaller, then walks along the road, then off the road under the overhanging trees of a wood.

19 EXT. CLEARING IN WOODS NIGHT

Her bag open beside her, YENTL takes a candle from it and tries to light it with the match. It goes out. She tries again. This time it lights. She lights the candle.

She looks around her. All is black and forbidding. She listens, scared, to the eerie sounds of the night. Then looks up to heaven.

YENTL
God, our heavenly Father - and my father who is also in heaven - may the light of this candle illuminate the night as your spirit illuminates my soul ...

She falters, then falls silent, then begins to sing:

PAPA CAN YOU HEAR ME?
PAPA CAN YOU SEE ME?
PAPA CAN YOU FIND ME IN THE NIGHT?

PAPA ARE YOU NEAR ME?
PAPA CAN YOU HEAR ME?
PAPA CAN YOU HELP ME NOT TO BE FRIGHTENED?

LOOKING AT THE SKIES I SEEM TO SEE A MILLION EYES
WHICH ONES ARE YOURS?
WHERE ARE YOU NOW THAT YESTERDAY HAS WAVED GOODBYE
AND CLOSED ITS DOORS?
THE NIGHT IS SO MUCH DARKER
THE WIND IS SO MUCH COLDER
THE WORLD I SEE IS SO MUCH BIGGER NOW THAT I'M ALONE.

PAPA PLEASE FORGIVE ME
TRY TO UNDERSTAND ME
PAPA DON'T YOU KNOW I HAD NO CHOICE?

CAN YOU HEAR ME PRAYING?
ANYTHING I'M SAYING?
EVEN THOUGH THE NIGHT IS FILLED WITH VOICES?

I REMEMBER EV'RYTHING YOU TAUGHT ME
EV'RY BOOK I EVER READ.
CAN ALL THE WORDS IN ALL THE BOOKS HELP ME FACE WHAT LIES AHEAD?

THE TREES ARE SO MUCH TALLER
AND I FEEL SO MUCH SMALLER
THE MOON IS TWICE AS LONELY
AND THE STARS ARE HALF AS BRIGHT.

PAPA HOW I LOVE YOU
PAPA HOW I NEED YOU
PAPA HOW I MISS YOU KISSING ME GOODNIGHT.

20 EXT. ROAD DAY

Bright sunshine. YENTL walks along, carrying her bag. Humming the melody of the previous song -- but with a little more spirit now that she's got through the night. She looks up. Sees a BIRD flying in the same direction. She smiles, and walks on.

THREE or FOUR PEASANT WOMEN are gathered by the roadside, eating hunks of bread, apples. They eye YENTL as she approaches. YENTL smiles amicably at them. Then, as YENTL passes -

PEASANT WOMAN
Are you hungry?

YENTL stops, turns.

Here!

She gives a chunk of bread to YENTL.

YENTL
Thankyou.

PEASANT WOMAN
Now, what'll <u>you</u> give <u>me</u>?

YENTL
What?

The PEASANT WOMAN makes a grab at YENTL's crotch. YENTL springs backwards. The OTHER WOMEN guffaw. YENTL runs off down the road with the bread. The PEASANT WOMAN calls after her:

PEASANT WOMAN
Hey! Give me my bread back!

21 EXT. CANAL LATER

Along the canal comes a river barge full of PASSENGERS with wicker cases.

In the background we see YENTL walking along beside the canal.

22 EXT. COURTYARD OF AN INN LATER

MEN are loading luggage onto two wagons. Others are feeding and grooming the wagons' horses.

YENTL enters the courtyard and crosses to the entrance of the inn. As she opens the door, we hear a barrage of noise - that of YOUNG MEN arguing, laughing and eating. She goes in.

23 INT. DINING ROOM OF INN CONTINUOUS

YENTL comes into the room -- and has never seen so many YOUNG MEN in her life. The inn swarms with YESHIVA BOYS aged from 16 to 35.

She walks between tables - past BOYS singing a Talmudic song, OTHERS sitting on their luggage poring over the Talmud, OTHERS playfully fighting, OTHERS writing letters, ONE already homesick and crying, ANOTHER lying curled up on the floor, his head resting on his suitcase ... then past a GROUP eating at a table and in mid-conversation ...

1ST BOY
Where?

2ND BOY
Lithuania. The best Yeshiva's are in Lithuania. It's a well-known fact.

3RD BOY
Lithuania! Poland! One Yeshiva's the same as another. A school is a school - classrooms and books. It's only the rabbis who are different.

1ST BOY
And the towns.

2ND BOY
And the <u>girls</u> in the towns.

1ST BOY
So where are the best girls, ox-head? Poland or Lithuania?

2ND BOY
Who cares? One girl's the same as another, thank God ...

YENTL watching OTHER BOYS hungrily eating, OTHERS stirring their glass of tea with penknives. She comes to TWO BOYS playing chess. studying the board intehtly. YENTL stops, studies the board. ONE OF THE BOYS is about to move one of his chessmen. Despite herself, YENTL suddenly blurts out:

YENTL
How about if you move your king over there?

CHESS PLAYER
How about if you move over there!

He indicates the other end of the room.

YENTL
Sorry.

The CHESS PLAYER moves his piece as he intended. He loses.

Well, either way, I suppose ... Who knew?

Watched by the whole table - ALL amused except the BOY who lost - she backs away. And bumps into another table where TWO BOYS are arm-wrestling. One's arm goes down with a thud.

LOSER
Damn!

BULLY
One kopek.

The LOSER throws a kopek onto the table and walks off. The BULLY looks at YENTL.

Hey, you! Sit down.

YENTL
What for?

BULLY
Because I said so.

YENTL promptly sits down.

Five kopeks if you win. Pay me one if you lose.

A few BOYS turn to watch. Among them is a tall, very handsome young man, with a beard and dark, blazing eyes. This is AVIGDOR. He has a mourner's tear in his coat. With him is a friend, SHIMMELE.

YENTL
What do I have to do?

The BULLY gets his arm into position with hers.

BULLY
Whoever forces the others' hand to the table.

YENTL
Um ... no thanks.

She tries to get up. Too late. The BULLY is already forcing her down by the wrist.

BULLY
Ready? Go!

They start handwrestling.

YENTL
Wasn't it Rabbi Akiba who said "The true strength of a man ..."

The BULLY immediately forces her hand down to the table.

BULLY
One kopek.

YENTL
(paying him)
Thankyou.

BULLY
Now again!

He starts to force her arm down again.

YENTL
" ... lies in his ability to stretch the narrowest mind ..."

AVIGDOR, standing behind the BULLY, and unseen by YENTL, grips the BULLY's other hand and forces it up behind his back. The BULLY winces in pain.

" ... and to bend for one instant the evil inclinations of the weakest soul."

She watches, in amazement, as she begins to force the BULLY's hand back.

Same rabbi.
(the bully's hand crashes to the table)
Some rabbi.

AVIGDOR
(to Bully)
Five kopeks you owe him.

The BULLY throws the money onto the table, glowers at AVIGDOR.

BULLY
(to Yentl)
Come back when your beard starts to grow!

He wanders petulantly off. The CROWD disperses.

AVIGDOR
So you're an admirer of Rabbi Akiba? So am I.

SHIMMELE and AVIGDOR sit at the table. SHIMMELE holds a bowl of soup in one hand and a buckwheat cake in the other.

And if it's any consolation, my brother didn't have one either.

YENTL
What??

AVIGDOR strokes his beard twice. YENTL understands. Relieved.

Oh, I see. Thanks.

SHIMMELE
I'm Shimmele, by the way. This is Avigdor.

YENTL
Oh.
(shakes their hands)
Hello.

AVIGDOR
Hello.

SHIMMELE
And who are you?

YENTL
What?

SHIMMELE
What's your name?

YENTL
(sudden panic)
Name?

SHIMMELE
(amused)
Name.

YENTL
(sudden inspiration)
Um ... Anshel! Yes, that's it! Anshel. My name's Anshel. That's my name.

SHIMMELE
(amused)
Well, fine. Which Yeshiva are you going to?

YENTL
Um ... I don't know. Any really. A quiet one.

AVIGDOR
(laughing)
A quiet Yeshiva?

SHIMMELE
Bechev's the best. Well, the nearest, anyway. That's where we go.

YENTL
I've never heard of Bechev ...

AVIGDOR
(smiles)
Which only proves how quiet it is!

SHIMMELE
It's for older students. You get older - you simmer down a little.

AVIGDOR
We've a genius for a rabbi. With one answer he settles ten questions.

YENTL
My father had ten questions for every answer

AVIGDOR looks at the tear in YENTL's coat.

AVIGDOR
You're in mourning?

YENTL
My father, may he rest in peace.
(sees his torn coat)
You?

AVIGDOR
My brother. Nathan. He was about your age. Pneumonia.

The LANDLORD comes in and yells loudly:

LANDLORD
Wagons to the north and west leaving now! And when I say now I mean now! Wagon to the South another hour.

SHIMMELE
That's us!

MOST OF THE BOYS scramble to their feet, grabbing their belongings. AVIGDOR grins at YENTL.

AVIGDOR
Goodbye, then.

YENTL
Goodbye.

AVIGDOR and SHIMMELE wolf their soup, ram their buckwheat cakes into their mouths, pick up their luggage and start for the door.

Good luck in Bechev!

AVIGDOR
(turns)
You too. In wherever-you-go.

AVIGDOR and SHIMMELE are swallowed up in the CROWD jostling its way out. YENTL sits alone. Looks round the room - which is now almost empty of YESHIVA BOYS, PEASANTS and TRAVELLERS.

AVIGDOR (O.S.)
Anshel!
(Yentl is oblivious)
Hey! Are you deaf! Anshel!

YENTL
(turning)
Oh ... Anshel.

She sees AVIGDOR silhouetted in the doorway.

AVIGDOR
There's a spare seat for Bechev, if you're still undecided.

YENTL
(jumping up happily)
I'm not! I'm not!

She grabs her bag and runs to the door.

24 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD DAY

The wagon trundles along through the countryside. In it, the BOYS are raucously singing. YENTL sits stiffly upright - embarrassed and a little shocked by the song - and trying hard to appear as though she's enjoying it. She avoids everyone's eyes.

BOYS
I HEARD IN VILNA THERE'S A BAKER
BAKES A BREAD SO FINE.
HIS LOAF'S SO BIG THAT ALL DAY LONG
THE LADIES STAND IN LINE,
CRYING:

BOYS (Cont)
"YOSHKE, YOSHKE, PUT IT IN THE POSHKE.
I LIKE HOW YOU MAKE IT.
YOSHKE, YOSHKE, PUT IT IN THE POSHKE,
WRAP IT UP, I'LL TAKE IT!"

THEY SAY IN LUBLIN THERE'S A BUTCHER
ALL THE GIRLS ADORE.
HIS MEAT'S SO SWEET THAT RAIN OR SHINE
THEY CROWD INTO HIS STORE,
SHOUTING:

"YOSHKE, YOSHKE, PUT IT IN THE POSHKE.
I LIKE IT HOW YOU MAKE IT.
YOSHKE, YOSHKE, PUT IT IN THE POSHKE.
WRAP IT UP, I'LL TAKE IT!"

During the middle section ...

AVIGDOR
So where are you from, Anshel?

YENTL
Oh, a little village no one's heard of, Yanev.

SHIMMELE
Yanev?! I think I've a relative in Yanev! A third cousin - maybe you've --

YENTL
(hastily)
We moved.

SHIMMELE
What?

YENTL
Years go.
(a beat)
You have cousins in Riga?

SHIMMELE
Riga? No.

YENTL
(promptly)
Now we live in Riga.

25 EXT. ROAD THE WAGON DRIVING THROUGH FARMLAND DAY LATER

A Polish PEASANT FAMILY, labouring close together in cultivated fields. A few PIGS, A GOAT, some GEESE and CHICKENS.

ANGLE ON POLISH BOY

His eyes follow the wagon and its load of STUDENTS. He doesn't understand - but they seem to be leading a better life than he

is. He mops his forehead and resumes work. The wagon rolls off into the distance.

26 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE LATER

The wagon draws to a halt. The YESHIVA BOYS come tumbling out, form an impromptu line by the side of the road, unbutton their flies and start to pee.

AVIGDOR
(in line)
You're not joining us, Anshel?

YENTL
(jumps)
Me? No, I'm alright ... I went bef ...
Not just now ...

YENTL remains in her seat, intently concentrating on whatever she can possibly look at - without having to look at the BOYS.

27 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD LATER

The wagon rolling along. Some of the BOYS are reading; OTHERS asleep. A general air of sleepiness. YENTL still sits upright - as opposed to EVERYONE ELSE who's sprawled out. AVIGDOR looks up from his book, watches the countryside for a moment.

YENTL
Excuse me --

A BOY
Ssshhh!

YENTL
(whispers to Avigdor)
Would you like to discuss a tractate or anything? Some passage from the Talmud?

AVIGDOR
What are the girls like in Riga?

YENTL
The girls?

AVIGDOR
(amused)
The girls!

YENTL
Oh, you know, sort of like girls. How about the tractate on celestial phenomena? In my view --

AVIGDOR
Are they ... you know ...
(indicates "big" with his hands)
... are they ...
(indicates "curvaceous")

YENTL
Intelligent, Very intelligent.

AVIGDOR
Oh. Intelligent.
(beat)
Fine. We'll keep away from Riga.
(pause)
Did you leave one back home?

YENTL
Um ... you could say that ...

28 EXT. BECHEV TWILIGHT

From the distance; overlooking the town. We see coloured roof-tops; the church steeple rising high. Smoke rolls from a few chimneys. The wagon rolls towards the town.

YENTL (V.O.)
Is that it?

AVIGDOR (V.O.)
That's it.

BOY (V.O.)
I wish you'd let us sleep, for God's sake! Another five minutes you'll be there.

YENTL (V.O.)
(whispering)
Will I be able to live at the Yeshiva?

BOY (V.O.)
Not this one. Listen - you'll find lodgings. Every day a different family feeds you. Housewives. They do your washing. Everything. Alright? So shut up for five minutes.

SHIMMELE (V.O.)
A lot of them have daughters ...

YENTL (V.O.)
Oh.

SHIMMELE (V.O.)
All looking for husbands ...

YENTLE (V.O.)
Oh.

AVIGDOR (V.O.)
Anyway, there may be a room where I stay. We'll ask. .

29 EXT. BECHEVE STREETS A LITTLE LATER

The wagon lumbers over the cobblestones, through the GENTILE SQUARE. Huge CHRISTIAN STATUES look down. The wagon stops in front of an archway, which leads up to the Jewish quarter.

MOST OF THE BOYS jump out with their luggage. AVIGDOR jumps out. General farewells as AVIGDOR turns to see YENTL struggling very inexpertly to clamber out.

AVIGDOR
You got a wooden leg or something?

YENTL
Um ... a cramp. It's a cramp, that's all.

SHIMMELE
(wandering off)
See you tomorrow.

AVIGDOR
See you tomorrow.

30 INT. MRS JACOBS' HOUSE LIVING ROOM NIGHT

MRS JACOBS is an old, almost blind woman. She's lighting a candle; tracing her hand up the candlestick, then to the wick. She brings a lighted taper towards it, feeling the heat coming towards her finger, lights the wick. Feels the heat from the candle to prove it's lit.

31 EXT. BECHEVE STREET CONTINUOUS

AVIGDOR and YENTL walking along. YENTL limps slightly from her jump. AVIGDOR notices, grins.

AVIGDOR
A Yeshiva boy's supposed to keep fit!

YENTL
Everybody gets a cramp now and then ...

32 INT. MRS JACOBS' HOUSE LIVING ROOM CONTINUOUS

MRS JACOBS is slicing bread at the table. There's a knock at the door. She turns towards it.

MRS JACOBS
Who is it?

AVIGDOR (O.S.)
It's me.

MRS JACOBS
Avigdor?

AVIGDOR (O.S.)
Well, who else? How many other boy-friends do you have?

She chuckles and opens the door. AVIGDOR enters followed by YENTL. MRS JACOBS feels AVIGDOR's face.

MRS JACOBS
You had a good holiday?

AVIGDOR
How could I?

MRS JACOBS
You missed her that much?

AVIGDOR
Only every minute of every day. The nights I won't even mention.

YENTL looks puzzled, a little disturbed.

MRS JACOBS
(laughing)
Shush! For shame! A wicked tongue!
(suddenly she frowns, uncertainly)
There's someone with you?

AVIGDOR
A friend of mine, Anshel. Anshel - Mrs Jacobs.

YENTL
Good evening, Mrs Jacobs.

MRS JACOBS cocks her ear ... slightly puzzled by the voice.

AVIGDOR
Have you a room for him?

MRS JACOBS
Not tonight. My niece is here from Latvia. She leaves tomorrow.

AVIGDOR
That's alright. For one night, he can share my bed.

YENTL
No, no, I can't!

AVIGDOR
Why not?

YENTL
I ... um ... I don't want to impose ... I'm ... I'm a restless sleeper.

AVIGDOR
That's alright. I snore.

MRS JACOBS holds out her hand to YENTL.

MRS JACOBS
Welcome then, Anshel.

YENTL shakes her hand. MRS JACOBS then puts her hand to YENTL's face and feels it with her fingertips. YENTL watches the fingers. Watches MRS JACOBS' face.

MRS JACOBS
Take your things up. I'll bring you up some soup.

AVIGDOR leads YENTL to the stairs. YENTL looks back at MRS JACOBS - whose face is expressionless. AVIGDOR and YENTL go upstairs. MRS JACOBS' face grows puzzled and uncertain.

33 INT. AVIGDOR'S ROOM LATER

AVIGDOR is in bed. YENTL is seated at a desk, reading by the light of a small lamp. She's exhausted and can hardly keep her eyes open. She watches him carefully. When she thinks he's asleep, she turns off the light, takes off her outer clothes and slips into bed very quickly. She li-s at the edge - as far from AVIGDOR as possible. A moment - then suddenly:

AVIGDOR
You'll fall off the edge...

YENTL
(jumps)
I always sleep like this!

AVIGDOR
Why?

YENTL
(racks her brains)
I think it's written.

AVIGDOR
What??

YENTL
Two bachelors in the same bed must lie back to back.

AVIGDOR
Really?

He turns his back to her. YENTL lies silently, facing the wall, almost afraid to breathe. A pause, then -

Oh, God ... the nights are even worse here than when I was away ...

YENTL
What?

AVIGDOR
Still ... I'll see her tomorrow.

YENTL
Uh-uh.
(beat)
Who?

AVIGDOR
Her parents give me dinner on Tuesdays. I'll take you.

YENTL
Thanks.
(beat)
Whose parents?

AVIGDOR
Whose?! The most wonderful girl in Bechev. The most wonderful girl in the world. The girl I'm engaged to. Her name is Hadaas.

YENTL
"Hadaas".

A silence for a moment. Then AVIGDOR suddenly starts tossing and turning.

AVIGDOR
Oh, God! Now I'll never get to sleep!

YENTL
Why not?

AVIGDOR
Why do you think?

YENTL
Oh.
(beat)
Why?

AVIGDOR
Don't you ever think sinful things?

YENTL
No.

AVIGDOR
No??

YENTL
Yes!
(beat)
What about?

AVIGDOR
What do you mean?

YENTL
What??

AVIGDOR
Women!

YENTL
Oh! All the time. Goodnight, Avigdor.

AVIGDOR
Goodnight.
(short silence)
Did I tell you she was blonde?

YENTL
Avigdor. I have to see the Rabbi tomorrow, so ... um ... goodnight.

AVIGDOR
Sorry. Goodnight.

They settle down. A pause.

YENTL
(muttering into her pillow)
Anyway ... I prefer brunettes.

AVIGDOR
(can't hear)
What?

YENTL
Goodnight.

AVIGDOR
Goodnight.

34 INT. YESHIVA CLASSROOM DAY

A large room - chairs, tables, bookshelves. About 30 YESHIVA STUDENTS ... some reading, some chanting and swaying, and TWO in the middle of a Talmudic discussion. We go with them as they walk down the room.

1ST STUDENT
So, according to that, which is the greater crime - stealing a chicken or an ox?

2ND STUDENT
Legally or morally?

1ST STUDENT
What?

2ND STUDENT
Morally - the chicken. Because the thief can lead the ox away. The chicken he has to carry. A squawking chicken in your arms can be embarrassing. The embarrassment's considered part of his punishment.

1ST STUDENT
And legally?

2ND STUDENT
The ox - because the owner's deprived of a working animal - and the ox of the chance to work while he's led away.

1ST STUDENT
So's the chicken!

2ND STUDENT
No. It could lay an egg in his arms on the way.

1ST STUDENT
So, is that more embarrassing or less?

They walk on, having led us to AVIGDOR, who is seated at a table reading a book. He glances at the door to the Rabbi's study. SHIMMELE, eating, approaches.

SHIMMELE
Is he still in there?

AVIGDOR glances back at the door.

35 INT. RABBI'S STUDY CONTINUOUS

YENTL is seated facing RABBI ZALMAN at his desk. The RABBI appears a little drained.

RABBI ZALMAN
No, Anshel! The whole point of study is to teach us how to <u>live</u> - not only to study ...

YENTL
But why ...?

RABBI ZALMAN
Again - why!

YENTL
No, I mean - excuse me - but my father used to quote Hillel, who said ... May I?

RABBI ZALMAN
May you what?

YENTL
Quote Hillel.

RABBI ZALMAN
(wearily)
Quote, quote.

YENTL
Well, Hillel said, "He that increases wisdom increases life".

RABBI ZALMAN
Exactly!

YENTL
Meaning that wisdom is the most important ...

RABBI ZALMAN
No! Only as the means to an <u>end</u>. Wisdom is the means. <u>Living</u> is the end.

YENTL
Well, in that case, may I ask you another question --?

RABBI ZALMAN
(defeated)
Ask. Ask.

36 INT. YESHIVA CLASSROOM A LITTLE LATER

AVIGDOR is now apparently looking through books at a bookcase while listening outside the door. SHIMMELE comes up, book in hand.

SHIMMELE
Well?

AVIGDOR shrugs. The door opens - AVIGDOR and SHIMMELE move to one side. YENTL emerges, looking despondent.

AVIGDOR
Well?

YENTL shrugs unhappily. RABBI ZALMAN emerges, serious-faced. YENTL looks at him, searchingly. As do AVIGDOR and SHIMMELE.

YENTL
(babbling)
I ask too many questions. I've been told before. I open my mouth and before I know it, there I ... Anyway thankyou for seeing me and I'm sorry to have troubled you and --

RABBI ZALMAN
(sternly)
It's by their questions that we choose our students. Not their answers.

YENTL
Really? Why?

RABBI ZALMAN
(amused)
Your father taught you well, Anshel. Welcome.

He shakes a bemused YENTL's hand. AVIGDOR and SHIMMELE pat her hard on the back. YENTL stares at RABBI ZALMAN as though in a trance.

YENTL
I'm accepted? I'm a student?
(glances heavenwards very briefly)
I'm a student.

AVIGDOR/SHIMMELE
Congratulations.

RABBI ZALMAN
Are you alright?

YENTL
Oh, yes. Very alright.

She, AVIGDOR and SHIMMELE start to walk away.

RABBI ZALMAN
Tell me, are you engaged yet?

YENTL
What?

RABBI ZALMAN
If not, we inform the matchmaker.

YENTL
Um ... I'm not easy to match ... they've had trouble with me before.

AVIGDOR
Don't worry. You can be matched with me.

YENTL
(even more bemused)
With you?

AVIGDOR
I'll be your study partner.

YENTL
Oh.
(a beat)
Thankyou.
(smiles weakly)

37 INT. VISHKOWER'S HOUSE DINING ROOM NIGHT

C.U. AVIGDOR smiling - entranced, enchanted.
C.U. HADAAS - looking beautiful, lowering her eyes modestly.

She's bringing an overfilled bowl of borscht to the table, trying not to spill it. Her father, REB ALTER, watches proudly. AVIGDOR watches, enchanted. YENTL watches both of them ... how nervous they are in each others' presence. HADAAS' mother, ESTHER RACHEL, can be heard humming in the kitchen. SOPHIE, the maid, is clearing fish crockery and cutlery.

REB ALTER
(to Yentl)
So your father - may he rest in peace - was a scholar?

YENTL
Yes. Yes, he was.

REB ALTER
And now his son after him! Good. At our table, Esther!

ESTER (O.S.)
I can hear! I can hear! How was the fish, boys?

AVIGDOR
(looking at Hadaas)
Delicious.

HADAAS sets down the borscht. It tilts. HADAAS looks at AVIGDOR as the red soup spills onto the white, linen tablecloth. AVIGDOR smiles at YENTL and then stares at the big red stain. AVIGDOR covers it with his napkin. ESTHER walks in, carrying a bowl of potatoes.

ESTHER
(trying not to notice)
You come from a big family, Anshel?

YENTL
No.

ESTHER
(puts bowl down on stain)
No brothers or sisters?

YENTL
No.

ESTHER
(ladling soup into Avigdor's bowl)
And your father never remarried?

HADAAS sets a potato into AVIGDOR's bowl, but she's gazing into his eyes at the same time. It goes "plop", spilling more red soup onto the cloth. YENTL throws AVIGDOR her napkin.

ESTHER
Hadaas, help Sophie clear some dishes.

YENTL
You have a beautiful home, Mrs Vishkower. So clean. Nice things ... electricity. Everything ...

ESTHER
Thankyou, Anshel.

HADAAS clears some utensils - ESTHER glares at her.

(to Reb Alter)
A jug of beer for the boys, dear. Or are you saving it up for the wedding?

HADAAS promptly drops a dirty fork into AVIGDOR's lap. Mortified, she takes a napkin to wipe his pants, but is too embarrassed to touch him. ESTHER takes over in cleaning off the stain. HADAAS runs from the room, followed by a glowering ESTHER.

REB ALTER
(embarrassed)
I'll get the beer. After dinner we maybe have a little vodka.

He exits. AVIGDOR turns to YENTL.

AVIGDOR
Well? Isn't she wonderful!

YENTL
Mrs Vishkower? Very nice.

AVIGDOR
No, idiot! Hadaas!

YENTL
Oh. Also nice.

38 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE VISHKOWERS' HOUSE . NIGHT

AVIGDOR and YENTL are making their way home. YENTL is pensive. AVIGDOR euphoric. Like an adolescent in love.

AVIGDOR
It's not perfume, you know. That fragrance. She doesn't even wear perfume. That's her!

YENTL
She doesn't say very much, does she?

AVIGDOR
What does she have to say?

YENTL
Don't you ever ... don't you ever wonder what she's thinking?

AVIGDOR
No.

AVIGDOR (Cont)
(beat)
All I ever wonder is how can I be so lucky.

YENTL
I see. There's a button coming off your coat.

AVIGDOR
What?

YENTL
Stand still.

She pulls the button off his coat and puts it in her pocket.

39 INT. YENTL'S ROOM NIGHT A LITTLE LATER

AVIGDOR is lying across YENTL's bed, arms around his head, staring at the ceiling. YENTL is seated at a small table sewing the button back on his jacket.

AVIGDOR
Why is your room nicer than mine?

YENTL
It isn't.

AVIGDOR
Feels nicer.
(looks across at her)
Where did you learn to sew?

YENTL
I took care of my father.

AVIGDOR
Now, tell me the truth - isn't she everything a woman should be? Have you seen a woman so graceful, and soft, and feminine and --

YENTL
She was a little nervous, don't you think?

AVIGDOR
(as though it were a compliment)
Hadaas? Very.

YENTL
A little clumsy, even.
(pricks herself with needle)
Ouch!

AVIGDOR
(delighted)
I know. Just wonderful.

A pause.

YENTL
You don't think it's just ... just physical passion?

AVIGDOR
What's wrong with physical passion?

YENTL
Well, obviously - as a student of the Bible -- you know that --

AVIGDOR
(amused)
As a student of the Bible, my friend, you ought to know that that's what half the Bible is about! And in 5,000 years no one's re-written it.
(laughs)
Where do you think children come from? Well, they don't come from rubbing two books together. Even two Bibles.

A pause.

YENTL
Nevertheless ... physical passion is only physical. It's not love. It's nothing to do with God.

AVIGDOR suddenly leaps to his feet and strides across to her.

(apprehensively)
What are you going to do??!

AVIGDOR stands at the table. Picks up pen and writes Hebrew letters on a piece of paper.

C.U. of what he's writing.

AVIGDOR (O.S.)
The Hebrew word for Man.
(writes again)
The Hebrew word for Woman.
(writes again)
These letters are different - this one and this one - make the word for God.
(writes again)
And those that are the same - here and here - make the word for Fire. Passion.

Looks at her, smiles.

AVIGDOR
We're made of passion. That passion is the nearest we get to God - to God's act of creation. To being God-like. It therefore makes Man and Woman one. And, therefore, without Hadaas half of me is missing. You've finished the button?

She hands him the coat. He examines the button.

You really can sew! Maybe you don't need a woman! Is that why you don't think about marriage?

YENTL
Maybe.

AVIGDOR
(exiting)
I suppose you can cook, too.

YENTL
As a matter of fact ... I can't.

She closes the door behind him.

40 EXT. PATH ALONGSIDE RIVER DAY

YENTL, AVIGDOR, SHIMMELE are strolling along the path. YENTL has a book in her hand and is pointing to a page.

YENTL
... Whereas, according to Rabbi Zalman, the first interpretation is open to two different --

SHIMMELE
Anshel, for God's sake! For one day, rest your brain!

AVIGDOR
Study other things, for a change. Look - there's a tree, study the tree. There's the sky. Study that.

YENTL
Sorry.

Suddenly we hear squeaking and giggling from behind a row of bushes. The sounds of YOUNG WOMEN splashing about in the river. The BOYS stop dead in their tracks.

SHIMMELE
Is that what I think it is?

AVIGDOR
Come on!

Excitedly - but as quietly as they can - AVIGDOR and SHIMMELE race towards the bushes. YENTL stands. Shrugs. Follows them.

41 EXT. RIVER BANK GIRL'S SECTION CONTINUOUS

Several GIRLS are bathing. They include PESHE. Some are clothed in gauzy, white slips clinging to their wet bodies. OTHERS are naked.

AVIGDOR and SHIMMELE peep at them from behind the bushes ... in excited reverence, moaning quietly to themselves. Suddenly their faces are joined by YENTL's. She pulls back, horrified.

YENTL
You mustn't!!

AVIGDOR
What?

YENTL
It's a sin!

AVIGDOR
Anshel, do me a favour. Go home and read a book.

He resumes his girl-watching.

YENTL
I think we should be studying ...

AVIGDOR
We <u>are</u>.

SHIMMELE
The one with the braids! Look at the one with braids!

YENTL
Why? They're all women - what's the difference?

AVIGDOR
<u>That's</u> the difference.

CUT TO PESHE and her bared, impressive breasts.

SHIMMELE
Like melons. Ripe melons.

AVIGDOR
Oh, my God! Her nipples are standing up!

YENTL
She's cold.

AVIGDOR turns, grins at her.

AVIGDOR
You know more than you let on, don't you?
(pokes her in the chest)
Isn't that right?

YENTL
(poking him back and speaking loudly)
That's right!

CUT TO GIRLS, turning. They've heard. They see THE BOYS; freeze; then splash down into the water, terrified. (PESHE isn't quite so terrified). AVIGDOR, SHIMMELE and YENTL make a shamefaced run for it.

As they run, AVIGDOR starts struggling out of his clothes.

YENTL
(apprehensively, while panting along beside him)
What are you doing?

AVIGDOR
I've got to cool off. Let's go for a swim.

42 EXT. RIVER BANK BOYS SECTION LATER

AVIGDOR, completely naked, runs into the water, followed by SHIMMELE (in his underwear). YENTL sits on the bank, fully dressed, with her knees drawn primly up. She reads - perhaps a little too intently. AVIGDOR is swimming.

AVIGDOR
(to Yentl)
Come on in!

YENTL
No, there's a passage here that ...

AVIGDOR
Don't you want to cool off?

YENTL
No - it's alright - I'll watch the clothes.

He swims for a few moments.

She lowers her book slightly, and her eyes stray over the top. She lowers them quickly as AVIGDOR emerges from the river and runs naked and dripping towards her.

AVIGDOR
You don't know what you're missing - it's perfect in there.

She hands him his shirt. He dries his face with it. Not knowing where to look or not to look, she throws herself on her back, flings her arm over her face. As she lies there, AVIGDOR playfully flicks water on her until she opens her eyes. She's startled and blushes furiously.

Did you see me?

YENTL
Mmm?

AVIGDOR
Good?

YENTL
Very.

During this, she hands him his pants. He rolls them into a pillow and stretches out, unselfconsciously naked.

AVIGDOR
What a day ...
(sighs pleasurably)
It's such a pleasure, it must be a sin ...

SHIMMELE
(calls)
Anshel! Why don't you come in?

YENTL
I catch cold easily.

AVIGDOR
(laughs)
That's not the reason.

YENTL
(horrified)
It isn't?

AVIGDOR
You can't swim.

YENTL
(relieved)
That's it! I can't swim!
(calls)
I can't swim, Shimmele!

SHIMMELE
(splashing about)
Well, neither can I!

AVIGDOR
(to Yentl)
Come on, I'll teach you.

YENTL
Next time.

He half-pulls her up.

AVIGDOR
You won't sink! I'll hold you up!

YENTL
Stop it, Avigdor!

He starts tugging off her coat.

You don't understand!

He lets her go, smiles.

AVIGDOR
Hey ... you really <u>are</u> scared ...

YENTL starts to walk away.

43 INT. YENTL'S ROOM LATE AFTERNOON

YENTL is packing clothes into her suitcase, set on top of the bed. She stops, then goes over to a small writing desk, takes out paper, picks up a pen. She writes:

YENTL
"Dear Avigdor",

She stops, puts down the pen. Gets up, goes over to her mirror.

Avigdor, I don't know how I'm going
to tell you this ... Don't faint ...
I'm a girl ...
(pauses, looks down at the floor)
Oh ... you fainted ...
(she thinks again)
Dear Avigdor, all I ever wanted to do
was study ... I wanted it so badly ...
dear Avigdor ...

She pours water into a basin; starts to undress, becoming a woman again. She begins to sing:

YENTL
THERE'S NO CHILL AND YET I SHIVER
THERE'S NO FLAME AND YET I BURN
I'M NOT SURE WHAT I'M AFRAID OF AND YET
I'M TREMBLING.

THERE'S NO STORM YET I HEAR THUNDER
AND I'M BREATHLESS, WHY I WONDER?
WEAK ONE MOMENT, THEN THE NEXT I'M FINE ...

I FEEL AS IF I'M FALLING EV'RY TIME I CLOSE
MY EYES
AND FLOWING THROUGH MY BODY IS A RIVER OF
SURPRISE
FEELINGS ARE AWAKENING I HARDLY RECOGNISE
AS MINE!

WHAT ARE ALL THESE NEW SENSATIONS?
WHAT'S THE SECRET THEY REVEAL?
I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND
BUT I LIKE THE WAY I FEEL.

OH, WHY IS IT THAT EV'RY TIME I CLOSE MY
EYES HE'S THERE
THE WATER SHINING ON HIS SKIN, THE SUNLIGHT
IN HIS HAIR
AND ALL THE WHILE I'M THINKING THINGS THAT
I CAN NEVER SHARE WITH HIM ...

I'M A BUNDLE OF CONFUSION
YET IT HAS A STRANGE APPEAL
DID IT ALL BEGIN WITH HIM
AND THE WAY HE MAKES ME FEEL.
I LIKE THE WAY HE MAKES ME FEEL.

44 INT. YENTL'S ROOM MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Moonlight shines through the window - on YENTL asleep in bed. She's tossing and turning ... dreaming of AVIGDOR. She hears knocking. It grows louder. A LOUD KNOCK - and she jumps up in bed. AVIGDOR has entered the room. He holds an open book.

AVIGDOR
(happily)
I was wrong, thank God!

YENTL
What?

AVIGDOR
It isn't a sin.

YENTL
What?

AVIGDOR
Pleasure! It's written! When we die and stand at the gates of Heaven, God asks us three questions -

YENTL
Avigdor! It's the middle of the night!

AVIGDOR
(reading)
"One: Did you learn my Laws? Two: Did you act faithfully with others? And three: Did you enjoy my world?"
(to Yentl)
"Did you enjoy my world"! Anshel! Pleasure is no sin!
(smiles)
Hope I didn't wake you up. I thought you'd want to know. Sleep well.

He exits, closes the door. YENTL drops back onto her pillow, drained.

YENTL
"Sleep well," he says! So where's that written?

45 INT. MRS JACOBS' BEDROOM CONTINUOUS

She's in bed. She listens to AVIGDOR's footseps as he returns to his room and the slam of his door. She smiles enigmatically.

46 EXT. BECHEV STREET NEXT MORNING

YENTL and AVIGDOR, carrying their books, are on their way to the YESHIVA. Among the TOWNSPEOPLE they pass are YOUNG WOMEN who look smilingly into their eyes. Each time, AVIGDOR can't hold their stares. YENTL can and does - boldly - till the WOMEN have to lower their eyes.

After her sleepless night and agitated emotions, YENTL is quiet - and nervy. AVIGDOR feels fine. He keeps looking at her.

Suddenly he stops at a statue. YENTL walks a pace or two, then turns.

YENTL
What's wrong?

AVIGDOR
That's what I want to know.

YENTL
Uh?

AVIGDOR
Every morning by the time we reach here, you've exhausted at least five rabbinical theories, six codes of law, the Seven Wonders of the World and the entire mystery of the Universe. This morning - not a word. What's wrong?

YENTL
Nothing.

AVIGDOR
(smiles a little thoughtfully)
My brother Nathan all over again ... In a little world of your own half the time ... not saying what's on your mind ... moody ...

YENTL
Who's moody?

AVIGDOR
Are you worried about something?

YENTL
No.

AVIGDOR
Your studies?

YENTL
Nothing, Avigdor!

AVIGDOR
I'm your study partner, you should tell me if you are.

YENTL
I'm not!!

AVIGDOR
With me sitting next to you, what've you got to worry about?

Which makes her feel even worse. He puts his arm round her shoulder as they continue down the street. Like brothers. The MUSIC OF SEVERAL SINS A DAY begins.

47 INT. YESHIVA CLASSROOM DAY

RABBI ZALMAN is conducting a class. YENTL is daydreaming, seated next to AVIGDOR.

RABBI ZALMAN
So which is the greater crime? Stealing by day or stealing by night? Anshel?

YENTL is miles away. AVIGDOR nudges her sharply in the ribs.

YENTL
Um ... by day.

AVIGDOR
(promptly)
By night.

RABBI ZALMAN
And why is that, Avigdor?

AVIGDOR
The thief not only deceives his sleeping victim, he thinks he's deceiving God, as well.

RABBI ZALMAN
The point being?

AVIGDOR
There are things you can hide from people, but there's nothing you can hide from God.

YENTL (V.O.)
AS GOD IS WATCHING I'M COMMITTING SEVERAL SINS A DAY
AND I COMMIT THEM EVEN AS I'M SITTING DOWN TO PRAY
I MUST ADMIT THAT I COMMITTED SEVERAL ON THE WAY

WIND blows the window open and scatters papers around YENTL.

OH, HOW AM I TO PAY FOR SEVERAL SINS A DAY

As she tries to grab her papers, MUSIC continues ...

48 EXT. RIVER BANK WOMEN'S SECTION DAY

Fall leaves blowing on the ground lead us to YENTL and AVIGDOR seated on the grass. YENTL studies a book while AVIGDOR watches A WOMAN breast-feeding her baby. IN B/G, ANOTHER WOMAN washes clothes.

AVIGDOR
We could study a thousand books ...
There's the deepest mystery of all.

YENTL
(looking)
Women's breasts again?

AVIGDOR
Childbirth.

YENTL
Oh.

AVIGDOR
Does that sound ridiculous?

YENTL
Not at all.

AVIGDOR
However many books we read, that's something we'll never know ...

YENTL gets up and strolls along.

YENTL (V.O.)
I KNOW HE DISAPPROVES OF HOW I'M DRESSING
WHEN I WAKE
HE'S ADDING TO HIS LIST WITH EV'RY BREAD
THAT I DON'T BAKE
I MUST CONFESS THAT I TRANSGRESS WITH
BABIES I DON'T MAKE.

She trips.

OH, HOW AM I TO PAY
FOR SEVERAL SINS A DAY?

The WASHERWOMAN wrings her washing. We see the water squeezed into the river. We hear THUNDER.

49 EXT. RABBI'S STUDY NIGHT

Rain beats against the window. Through it we see RABBI ZALMAN and a CLASS. The room is candlelit.

50 INT. RABBI'S STUDY CONTINUOUS

RABBI ZALMAN
Demons! Devils! The Evil Eye!
A religion of fear and ignorance,
of superstition and guilt.
(beat)
And all of it - nonsense.
(smiles)
Except to those who believe it!

The STUDENTS laugh. AVIGDOR, laughing, turns to YENTL.

AVIGDOR
You don't believe in them, do you?

YENTL
(laughing)
Of course not!

THEY'RE HEATING SPIKES ON WHICH TO HOOK ME
STIRRING POTS IN WHICH TO COOK ME
FOR MY WICKED WAYS
THEY'LL GIVE ME HEADACHES, CRAMPS AND SPLINTERS
HOTTER SUMMERS, COLDER WINTERS
PLAGUING ALL MY DAYS.

THUNDER. The BOYS jump - grab each other.

IT'S NOT THAT I BELIEVE IN THEM, I'D BE
A FOOL TO
BUT COULD IT HURT TO SAY AN EXTRA PRAYER
IN SHUL TODAY?

51 EXT. YESHIVA COURTYARD DAY

It's raining. We see BLACK UMBRELLAS moving about. The BOYS are building a SUCCOTH TENT. One PINK UMBRELLA comes in from the left. The BLACK UMBRELLAS start to move to the PINK ONE.

YENTL (V.O.)
THOUGH GOD IS NOT TOO HAPPY WITH THE WAY THAT
I BEHAVE
IT'S WORTH THE PRICE IF I CAN GET THE LEARNING
THAT I CRAVE
IT WOULDN'T HURT IF I WAS ALSO LEARNING TO BE
BRAVE

AVIGDOR - who's working with YENTL - takes the umbrella and goes to HADAAS - who's holding the PINK one (and a plate of cakes) - and leaves YENTL getting soaked.

FOR THE TIME WHEN I'LL PAY FOR MY SEVERAL
SINS A DAY.

52 INT. VISHKOWER'S HOUSE REB ALTER'S LIVING ROOM/STUDY NIGHT

REB ALTER, AVIGDOR and YENTL cross the living room into the study. REB ALTER gives YENTL a pipe, lights it for her.

YENTL (V.O.)
I CAN'T BELIEVE I'VE COME THIS FAR AND NO ONE'S
GOTTEN WISE
AND SEEN THROUGH MY DISGUISE
OR CAUGHT ME IN THE LIES I TELL
HOW LONG CAN I PERPETUATE THIS TAMPERING WITH FATE

YENTL blows out by mistake - the ashes erupt from the bowl and burn her.

I FEAR THE ANSWERS WAIT FOR ME IN HELL!

53 EXT. MARKETPLACE DAY

C.U. Fire.
The fire is burning in a brazier in which chestnuts are roasting. YENTL is warming her hands over it. AVIGDOR is standing some distance away.

AVIGDOR
(calling)
Anshel! Throw me one!

She throws one to him. He laughs.

You throw like a girl!

She throws another - twice as hard.

54 EXT. A FROZEN LAKE DAY

A snowball - thrown by YENTL - hits AVIGDOR full in the face.

YENTL (V.O.)
AS GOD IS WATCHING I'M COMMITTING SEVERAL SINS A DAY
AND I COMMIT THEM EVEN AS I'M SITTING DOWN TO PRAY

He wipes the snow from his face, and looks at her threateningly.

AVIGDOR
Right!

He chases her across the ice.

AND I SUBMIT THAT I'M OMITTING SEVERAL ON THE WAY

She falls on the ice. It cracks.

OH, HOW AM I TO PAY
FOR SEVERAL SINS A DAY!

He reaches her.

I KNOW THAT I WILL HAVE TO PAY
FOR SEVERAL SINS A DAY!

AVIGDOR
Don't move! I'll help you.

He puts her cap on her head. It's filled with snow. The snow runs down her face.

SOME DAY I'LL HAVE TO PAY
FOR SEVERAL SINS A DAY!

55 INT. VISHKOWER'S HOUSE HALLWAY DAY

SOPHIE emerges, solemn-faced, from REB ALTER's study. She holds a note in her hand. She crosses the hall, takes a cloak from the hallstand, hurriedly wraps it round herself and exits through the front door with her note.

56 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE VISHKOWER'S HOUSE CONTINUOUS

SOPHIE emerges from the front door and runs down the street gripping the note tightly.

57 EXT. YESHIVA DAY

YENTL and AVIGDOR are making their way up the steps towards the entrance of the Yeshiva. They're in mid-argument. YENTL is agitated, impassioned; AVIGDOR in a relaxed, light-hearted mood.

YENTL
It's a misinterpretation - don't you understand! The Hebrew word for rib never meant rib - it meant side.

AVIGDOR
Rib, side - what difference?

YENTL
What difference? All the difference in the world! Literally! If Adam was created both male and female -

AVIGDOR
Where's that written?

YENTL
Genesis, Chapter 5, verse 2 - "When they were created He blessed them and called them Adam". And God took one side of Adam - not his rib - and created woman - then that means they're identical! Don't you see!

AVIGDOR
All I see is you've never seen a woman!

YENTL
What I mean is - they share masculine and feminine qualities - since they come from the same source. And if Adam was created both male and female and created in God's image, then God must also be male and female! It makes perfect sense.

AVIGDOR
What doesn't make sense is why you care so much.

SOPHIE runs towards the Yeshiva.

SOPHIE
Excuse me, gentlemen!

YENTL and AVIGDOR turn.

SOPHIE
(holding note up)
From Reb Vishkower!

AVIGDOR leans over as she hands the note up to him. He takes it.

SOPHIE
Thankyou.

She hurries off. AVIGDOR reads the note, grins.

AVIGDOR
He wants to see me

YENTL
He will tonight. We're eating there.

AVIGDOR
No, now. He wants to see me <u>now</u>.

YENTL
What for?

AVIGDOR
(shrugs)
The dowry? The wedding ceremony?
(smiles)
The wedding <u>night</u>?

YENTL goes into the Yeshiva courtyard.

58 EXT. YESHIVA COURTYARD CONTINUOUS

YENTL enters, turns back to AVIGDOR.

YENTL
See you soon.

AVIGDOR
Wait a minute! It's time you learned the true story of Adam and Eve -

YENTL
No one mentioned Eve ...

AVIGDOR
God didn't make her from Adam's ear--
(he cuffs her ear)
- so's she wouldn't eavesdrop!
Nor from his foot -
(tries to step on her foot)
- so's she wouldn't wander!

YENTL
You're supposed to be at the Vishkowers'!

AVIGDOR
Nor from his heart -
(pokes Yentl in the chest)
- so's she wouldn't be jealous!

YENTL
Avigdor! They're expecting you at the ---

AVIGDOR
He made her from a hidden part of the body - a modest part - so she'd be modest. Like my Hadaas.
(pokes her in the rib)
In other words - the rib!

He turns to go, laughing.

YENTL
(rubbing her rib)
Why are you always hitting me?

AVIGDOR
(turns back)
What?

YENTL
You're always hitting me these days.

AVIGDOR
(suddenly discomfited)
I didn't know I was ...

YENTL
Well, you are.

AVIGDOR
(a beat, shrugs uneasily)
So? Everything has to have a reason?

He goes. YENTL watches, smiles to herself, and closes the door.

59 INT. REB ALTER'S STUDY DAY

REB ALTER and AVIGDOR face each other. REB ALTER looks grave.

AVIGDOR
Reb Vishkower, sir, I know you're concerned about your only daughter, but I want to assure you that I'll devote my life to making her happy ...

REB ALTER
(cutting him off)
Tell me about your brother!

60 EXT. VISHKOWERS' HOUSE NIGHT

YENTL is on the doorstep. SOPHIE opens the door. YENTL goes in.

61 INT. VISHKOWERS' HALL CONTINUOUS

As SOPHIE closes the door, YENTL crosses the hall towards the dining room.

YENTL
Where's Avigdor?

SOPHIE avoids her look and exits to the kitchen.

62 INT. VISHKOWERS' DINING ROOM CONTINUOUS

YENTL enters - to see HADAAS hunched over the table - sobbing heartbrokenly. ESTHER stands beside her, comforting her - also in tears. She looks up at YENTL.

ESTHER
You're still welcome to eat here, Anshel ... whatever's happened ...

YENTL
Where's Avigdor?

HADAAS runs from the room, weeping.

YENTL, nonplussed, looks across to the study. Through the opened curtains, she sees REB ALTER, seated, resting his head despondently in his hand. YENTL turns back to ESTHER.

YENTL
Excuse me. Goodnight.

She runs out. The door closes.

63 INT. MRS JACOBS' HOUSE MOMENTS LATER

The door flies open. YENTL bursts in and races upstairs.

64 INT. AVIGDOR'S ROOM CONTINUOUS

The door flies open. YENTL bursts in. AVIGDOR is standing by the window, watching the snow. He has tears in his eyes.

YENTL
What's happened?

AVIGDOR
The engagement's broken. There's to be no wedding.

YENTL
Why, Avigdor?

AVIGDOR
They think my family has the Evil Eye. He thinks melancholy runs in our blood. Marriage into such a family is forbidden.

YENTL
But ... wait ... why should he think your family --

AVIGDOR
He found out about my brother, Anshel. My brother, Nathan.
(turns)
I'd lied about him. He didn't die of pneumonia. He committed suicide.

YENTL
(sits on bed)
Oh, my God.
(pause)
How? What happened?

AVIGDOR
Like I told you - he lived in a world of his own. Then, one day, even that world was too much for him ...

YENTL
I'm sorry.

A silence. He turns to her, heartbrokenly.

AVIGDOR
Maybe it does run in the family. I don't want to live now. Not without Hadaas. My life's over.

YENTL
(gently)
Avigdor. What does she care how he died? She'll still marry you.

AVIGDOR
Not if her parents forbid it. How can she?

YENTL
If she thinks her parents are wrong, she can! It's the Law. It's written!

AVIGDOR
You don't understand! She's a woman. She's weak. Women can't think for themselves. You know that.

YENTL
They're not born weak. It's men who've made them think they are. And besides ...

AVIGDOR
Please, this is no time for philosophical arguments. I've lost the one girl I've ever loved - will ever love and you babble on about....

He peters into silence. She goes over to him.

YENTL
(gently)
So you'll fall in love again.

AVIGDOR
No.

YENTL
Listen to me. Hadaas is pretty. A nice girl.
(a beat)
But no more.
(a beat)
Don't make her into more than she is.
(a beat)
How well do you even know her? What she thinks ...?

AVIGDOR
I don't need her to think. I need her to love. And take care of me. All I want is Hadaas. To be married to Hadaas. It was meant to be. Have you never wanted anything so badly you couldn't live without it.?

YENTIL
Yes.

AVIGDOR
Now every man in Bechev'll be after her. Maybe even you.

YENTL
That's one thing you don't have to worry about ...

AVIGDOR
Is this really happening? Anshel? It's like a dream.

YENTL
It's getting dark in here.

YENTL goes over to light the lamp.

AVIGDOR
An hour ago I was the happiest man in the world ... now, look at me. A scholar with his nose running.

She hands him a handkerchief. He blows his nose. YENTL sits on the bed. Touches him.

YENTL
I believe there could be someone else for you.

AVIGDOR smiles at her sadly. Turns back to the window. Watches the snow.

AVIGDOR
No, Anshel. No one.

65 INT, YESHIVA CLASSROOM DAY

YENTL is looking out of the window. A class is in progress. She's seated by the window. The seat beside her is conspicuously empty. The rest of the room is filled with STUDENTS (seated beside PARTNERS) sharing books. RABBI ZALMAN is at his desk.

RABBI ZALMAN (O.S.)
Anshel!

She jumps then faces front.

If, in the absence of your study-partner, you find the mysteries of window-frames more interesting than the Talmud, I suggest you go home.

YENTL
Sorry ... I was ...

RABBI ZALMAN
Daydreaming.

YENTL
Thinking.
(a beat)
It's only a chill. Maybe he'll be better tomorrow.

RABBI ZALMAN
As you said yesterday.. And the day before. Go home, Anshel.

She gets up, gathers her books. SHIMMELE leans over to her.

SHIMMELE
You've no study-partner ...

YENTL
Not now.

SHIMMELE
Will I do?

She smiles.

66 EXT. BECHEV STREET DAY A LITTLE LATER

As YENTL crosses it, she sees a small BOY crying. She bends down to comfort him. After a moment, she catches herself and looks round to see if she's been seen. The CHILD turns on hearing his name called. YENTL quickly straightens and moves on, as we see a SUSPICIOUS MOTHER standing in the doorway.

67 EXT. PESHE'S BAKERY DAY A LITTLE LATER

YENTL is walking home. Is passing the bakery window. Stops to look in.

PESHE is arranging cakes and bread in the window. She looks at YENTL intently. YENTL's eyes looks straight back into hers. PESHE holds her look, smiles meaningfully. YENTL still stares back at her, unmoved. Finally - very slightly embarrassed - PESHE looks away.

YENTL goes into the store.

68 INT. PESHE'S BAKERY CONTINUOUS

PESHE is returning to her counter. YENTL enters.

PESHE
Good-day, sir.

YENTL
Good-day. How much are the cream cakes?

PESHE
(smiles flirtatiously)
You didn't look away.

YENTL
What?

PESHE
Out there. Yeshiva boys always look away. They can't help it.

YENTL
Um ... the cream cakes in the --

PESHE
Because they're ashamed of the wicked thoughts they're thinking.
(coyly)
Because they're too innocent to do more than think them.

YENTL
Listen, all I --

PESHE
You're not afraid ... like other men. And you don't even shave yet. You're very wicked indeed ...I should imagine ...

YENTL
(picking up cake)
How much?

PESHE
I had a husband - may he rest in peace - he had a big beard ...
(regretfully)
... but he wasn't at all wicked. Two kopeks.

YENTL
Thankyou.

PESHE
You're not even going to bargain?

YENTL
No.

PESHE
Come here, come here. One kopek.
(Yentl sorts out coins from pocket)
You and that handsome Avigdor saw me naked, didn't you? Last summer. In the river.

YENTL
(embarrassed: pays her)
Good-day.

PESHE
Tell him, if he ever wants to see me again - I'm here. Not naked, though ... I should imagine ...

She giggles. YENTL smiles shamefacedly and makes a quick exit.

69 INT. MRS JACOBS' LIVING ROOM A FEW MINUTES LATER

YENTL enters, with the cake, and starts for the stairs. MRS JACOBS appears from the kitchen.

MRS JACOBS
Avigdor?

YENTL
Anshel.

MRS JACOBS
He didn't eat again, Anshel ...

YENTL
Nothing?

MRS JACOBS
He just lets it go cold.

YENTL starts up the stairs two at a time.

70 INT. AVIGDOR'S ROOM CONTINUOUS

AVIGDOR is packing his suitcase with clothes. YENTL knocks and enters. Sees what he's doing. The colour drains from her face. She watches for a long moment.

YENTL
That's not the answer, Avigdor.
(he ignores her)
Running away is never the....
(she checks herself)
Where will you go?

AVIGDOR
What's it matter? Anywhere.

YENTL
I'll come with you!

AVIGDOR
You have to study.

YENTL
I have no study partner.

AVIGDOR
(sighs)
I'm sorry.

YENTL
It doesn't matter.

AVIGDOR
No? It's all you live for!

YENTL
We'll go to another town! We'll join another Yeshiva.

AVIGDOR
(a beat)
You're right.

YENTL
(happily)
Of course I'm right! I'm always --

AVIGDOR
It isn't the answer.

YENTL
(face falling)
What?

He starts unpacking again.

AVIGDOR
I'd never see her again.

YENTL
Wasn't that the idea?

AVIGDOR
It's a bad idea.

YENTL
It was your idea!

YENTL crosses to the window. Looks out. A pause.

Maybe I'll go to another Yeshiva anyway ...

AVIGDOR
(bitterly)
Why not? You dessert me too. Thanks, friend.

She turns, please at what he's said. A beat; she smiles.

YENTL
I bought you a present! To cheer you up!

She runs over to the bed, picks up the cream cake, holds it out to him. He stares at it, then at her, in disbelief.

AVIGDOR
Are you mad??

YENTL
I just thought ...
(beat)
Never mind, I'll eat it.

AVIGDOR
(sighs)
You'll get better cream cakes tonight.

YENTL
(alarmed)
You don't think I'm going there without you?!

AVIGDOR
It's Tuesday. They'll expect you.

YENTL
So let them!

AVIGDOR
I want you to go.

YENTL
No.

AVIGDOR
Anshel, I want you to.
(looks at her helplessly)
If you're with her, it's the nearest thing to me being with her ...

She's profoundly disturbed by his statement. What does it mean?

71. INT. VISHKOWERS' HOUSE DINING ROOM EVENING

REB ALTER, ESTHER, HADAAS and YENTL are finishing their meal in an awkward, heavy silence.

MIX SLOWLY from ONE to the OTHER ... toying with their food; catching each others' eye, smiling uncomfortably then looking away. Eventually, YENTL pushes her plate aside.

ESTHER
(promptly)
A little more, Anshel?

YENTL
No, thankyou, Mrs Vishkower. Delicious.

ESTHER
You enjoyed it?

REB ALTER gives her a fractional glance of irritation.

YENTL
Well, yes ... It was ... um ... delicious.

ESTHER
Good.
(then, undeterred)
Hadaas cooked it all ... including its pastry ...

HADAAS
Mother!

REB ALTER gives her a dirty look and kicks her under the table.

YENTL
Ah.
(to Hadaas)
Delicious, Hadaas.

HADAAS
Thankyou. I'm ... I'm glad you came tonight ... I'm pleased you ...

ESTHER
Listen, pastry's a gift! It's a God-given howdoyoucallit! Some people are great musicians, others --

REB ALTER
Esther!

ESTHER
(innocently)
I'm discussing musicians ...!

An embarrassed pause.

YENTL
As a matter of fact, Avigdor always said her pastry was --

REB ALTER
The mention of that name is forbidden in this house!

YENTL stares at him; freezes.

There is no one of that name.

HADAAS gets up, close to tears.

HADAAS
I'll get the tea.

She starts for the kitchen.

ESTHER
And your cream cakes!

YENTL
Sir, I don't think you're being fair. I'm sure if you spoke to the Rabbi -

REB ALTER
Enough, Anshel. For our daughter we want a man who'll be an honour to the community - a man with no secrets to hide.

He exits to study.

ESTHER
All I was saying - no reason - is that to have a wife who can cook like my Hadaas, any man would -

YENTL
(promptly rising again)
I must go now, Mrs Vishkower. A little studying to do.
(towards the study, pointedly)
With Avigdor.

72. EXT. VISHKOWERS' HOUSE A LITTLE LATER

The street lamps shine in the night, glowing softly against the snow. YENTL emerges from the front door and starts walking down the deserted street.

Suddenly AVIGDOR comes out of the shadows. YENTL jumps and chokes back a scream.

AVIGDOR
How is she?

YENTL
(holding her heart)
Don't you think I've had enough palpitations for one night?

AVIGDOR
Did you speak to her?

YENTL
Of course.

AVIGDOR
What about? I ate for three months before I spoke a word to her!

YENTL
Why - is she a Countess of something?

AVIGDOR
Did she mention me?

YENTL
She more than mentioned you, Avigdor, she's still in love with you, and it's breaking her heart.

AVIGDOR
(quietly)
Oh, God ...

YENTL
Avigdor. You mustn't accept this! You've got to do something.

AVIGDOR
What do you mean?

YENTL
Try to persuade her.

AVIGDOR
There's no point ...

YENTL
Look, I'm sure Reb Alter ...I mean, I'm sure that, soon - to save face - they'll try and find someone else for her, so -

AVIGDOR
Like who?

YENTL
Anyone.

AVIGDOR
Did they mention someone?

YENTL
No ...

AVIGDOR
You??

YENTL
Look, all I'm staying ...

AVIGDOR is staring at her wildly. A long moment.

YENTL
(uncomfortably)
All I'm saying ---

AVIGDOR then breaks off the stare and starts walking hurriedly across the street.

Avigdor, we live that way!

She points in the opposite direction to the one he's walking in. He ignores her.

Where are you going?
(Avigdor breaks into a run)
Avigdor!

She starts to run after him.

73 EXT. YESHIVA COURTYARD A MOMENT LATER

AVIGDOR races up the stairs - and through the door. YENTL follows.

74 INT. YESHIVA CLASSROOM A LITTLE LATER

The room is lit by an oil lamp. AVIGDOR is alone, searching through ancient books which he grabs from the bookshelves, skims through - then drops onto the floor.

YENTL bursts in at the door. He ignores her; continues reading. She stands there, panting, holding her side.

YENTL
You know I get cramps.
(sees books on the floor)
Avigdor! That's a sin! That you also know!

She drops to her knees, gathers up the books, kissing each in turn and clasping them to her chest, as she did in Yanev.

AVIGDOR continues reading. She stands up, watching him in growing apprehension.

YENTL
Please. What's happening?

AVIGNOR
(turns to her, smiles)
Anshel, sit down.

He leads her to a chair. Takes the books from her and puts them on a table between them. Sits opposite her. Smiles almost cheerfully. Which is even more worry to YENTL.

AVIGNOR
I'm going to make you the happpiest man in the world.

YENTL
(apprehensively)
Yes?

AVIGDOR
Anshel, it's written.

YENTL
What's written, Avigdor?

AVIGDOR
It's the perfect solution. We're like brothers. If one dies, it's the other's obligation to marry his widow.

YENTL boggles at him - totally mystified.

YENTL
No one's died ... Who's died?

AVIGDOR
(slowly; measured)
I want you to marry Hadaas.

YENTL
Oh, no ...

AVIGDOR
Yes.

YENTL
Never, Avigdor! Never! I couldn't! Never, ever!

AVIGDOR
Why not?

YENTL
Um ... she loves <u>you</u>!

AVIGDOR
Listen. Let me explain -

YENTL
Anyway, you're not dead! Hadaas isn't a widow! And I'm not your brother.

AVIGDOR
In my eyes, you are.

YENTL
In my eyes, you're crazy!

AVIGDOR
Ssshhh! Listen -

YENTL
I don't want to marry her, Avigdor!
I don't want to marry anyone!
I don't love her! I can't love her!

AVIGDOR
I know. That's good.

YENTL
What??

AVIGDOR
Listen --

YENTL
My God, he <u>is</u> crazy!

AVIGDOR
It runs in the family! Will you listen!

YENTL
No!!

AVIGDOR
I can't bear the thought of her with another man.

YENTL
Aren't I another man?

AVIGDOR
But not a total stranger.
(grips her by the shoulders)
Think of <u>her</u> a minute! They may marry her off to someone she doesn't even know. Let alone <u>like</u>. Let alone <u>love</u>!

YENTL
She could never love <u>me</u>!

AVIGDOR
... Someone who may take her away - and I'd never see her again. It would be the end of me.
(a pause)
So she could never love you, Anshel. But at least she likes you. She's at ease with you. And ... and I could see her. I could visit you both. The three of us together. I could be near her ... if only to --

YENTL
Avigdor. You're talking like a madman. Listen ... I have ... no ... no passion for Hadaas.

AVIGDOR
Good.

YENTL
Good? What sort of marriage is that?

AVIGDOR
Passion isn't everything ...

YENTL
Wait! Is this the same Avigdor I've known all these months?
(a beat)
Yes, it is! This is passion really gone mad!

AVIGDOR
She'll look after you.

YENTL
No!

AVIGDOR
A wealthy family.

YENTL
No!

AVIGDOR
A beautiful girl.

YENTL
It's impossible!

AVIGDOR
Why do you always have to be different!
(a beat)
Anshel, in marriage friendship and respect are also blessings ...

YENTL
In marriage, Avigdor, the Law commands be fruitful and multiply!

AVIGDOR
(smiles)
Anshel. Time will go by. Tempers cool. Things change. Who knows - perhaps even her father. Your marriage could be dissolved. And Hadaas and I could --

YENTL has been listening to this in horrified incredulity.

YENTL
Avigdor, I'd do anything for you, - but not this. This is terrible ... this is so wrong ... so sinful ...

AVIGDOR
It's fate. It's meant to be.

YENTL
(violently)
Nothing's meant to be! We make our own fate! We make what's meant to be!

AVIGDOR
It'll be our secret. You marrying her is the nearest to me marrying her ...
(takes her hand)
Please, Anshel. If you have any feeling for me at all ... think about this.

CLOSE ON YENTL.

75 INT. VISHKOWERS' HOUSE DINING ROOM. EVENING. THE NEXT WEEK

YENTL and HADAAS are eating noodles and cheese. HADAAS butters bread for YENTL, fills her glass, moves salt nearer, then goes to put a log on the fire. YENTL is staring at her. HADAAS feels YENTL staring and lowers her eyes. A knock at the door breaks the spell. HADAAS goes to the door. TWO GIRLS are there, bundled up in scarves and mittens. ONE peeks in to see YENTL. The OTHER stands behind her on tiptoe, giggling. HADAAS prevents them from entering.

1ST GIRL
Oh, you have company.

2ND GIRL
(waves)
Good evening, Anshel.

HADAAS
Who let you two in!

1ST GIRL
Sophie. I just came to show you my new shawl. From Warsaw.

2ND GIRL
And I just sort of came with her...

HADAAS
Sarah. Anna. Please go.

1ST GIRL
Do you like it, Anshel?

HADAAS
Sarah! Please!

They go. There's a pause.

HADAAS
They're getting bolder. Till tonight they've been content with peeping at you from their window.

YENTL
What?

HADAAS
They live across the street.

YENTL
They peep at me?

HADAAS
Of course, you. And the more you ignore them - the more they -

YENTL
Ignore them? I've never even seen them!

HADAAS
They like you because you don't wink at them. Or brag to them. Or get tongue-tied. Like other men. Some bread?
(begins to butter his bread)
They all think you're different. You could have the most beautiful girl in Bechev for the asking.

YENTL
I thought you were the most beautiful girl in Bechov.
(an awkward pause)
I mean, Avigdor always ...
(another awkward pause)

HADAAS
More noodles? They're your favourite.

YENTL
How do you know?

HADAAS
You said so. Last Tuesday. At dinner.

YENTL
I don't remember.

HADAAS
I do.

A pause.

YENTL
Aren't your parents having dessert?

HADAAS
They're in the drawing room. Trying to make a decision.

YENTL
About what?

HADAAS
About every eligible bachelor in Poland. I've had many offers. From as far away as Zomosc and Tomashev. Even Lublin. But no one I really feel comfortable with.
(pause)
Don't you ever think about marriage?

YENTL
Um .. I just think about my studies.

HADAAS
That's good. That's what girls like in a man. I'll get your dessert.

She goes into the kitchen. YENTL sits there in a daze.

YENTL
NO WONDER HE LOVES HER - NO WONDER AT ALL
THE MOMENT SHE SEES HIM
HER THOUGHT IS TO PLEASE HIM
BEFORE HE EVEN KNOWS THAT HE'S HUNGRY
SHE'S ALREADY THERE WITH HIS PLATE
BEFORE HIS GLASS IS EVEN EMPTY SHE'S POURING THE WINE
GOD FORBID, HE SHOULD WAIT!
BEFORE HE HAS THE CHANCE TO TELL HER IT'S CHILLY
SHE'S PUTTING A LOG ON THE FIRE
FULFILLING HIS EV'RY DESIRE.
NO TROUBLE, NO BOTHER? -
NO WONDER SHE'S PRETTY - WHAT ELSE SHOULD SHE BE?
SHE HASN'T A WORRY AND WHY SHOULD SHE WORRY -
WHEN SHE GETS UP HER BIGGEST DECISION IS FIGURING OUT
WHAT TO WEAR
TO PICK A BLOUSE, A SKIRT
AND THEN THERE'S THE PROBLEM OF WHAT SHOULD SHE DO WITH
HER HAIR?
AND LATER AS SHE STANDS AND STUDIES A CHICKEN
THE QUESTION'S "TO ROAST, OR NOT TO ROAST?"
OR BETTER YET MAYBE A POT ROAST?
TOMATOES? NO - POTATOES?
NO WONDER HE LIKES IT - IT'S PERFECT THIS WAY
WHO WOULDN'T WANT SOMEONE WHO FUSSES AND FLATTERS
WHO MAKES YOU FEEL THAT YOU'RE ALL THAT MATTERS
WHOSE ONLY AIM IN LIFE IS TO SERVE YOU
AND MAKE YOU THINK SHE DOESN'T DESERVE YOU
NO WONDER HE LOVES HER - WHAT ELSE COULD HE DO?
IF I WERE A MAN - I WOULD TOO!

HADAAS re-enters, carrying a tray of desserts, and tea and accessories. She smiles at YENTL. Ravishingly. YENTL is examining a plate.

YENTL
I was just admiring your china.

HADAAS
You look pensive.

YENTL
No, no ... not at all. I was just thinking.

HADAAS laughs, YENTL realises what she's said - and laughs too.

HADAAS
About me?

YENTL
As a matter of fact, yes.

HADAAS
Good thoughts, I hope.

HADAAS, very near to YENTL, pours cream on a baked apple.

YENTL
Something smells good - what is it?

HADAAS
The cinnamon in the baked apples.

YENTL
Oh, you bake apples, too?

YENTL (V.O.)
NO WONDER HE LOVES HER - NO WONDER TO ME
WITH RIBBONS AND LACES IN ALL THE RIGHT PLACES

HADAAS
Shall we have tea by the fire?

YENTL
Um ... Certainly.

HADAAS
Would you like a cushion for your back?

YENTL
Thankyou.

HADAAS
And a footstool for your feet?

YENTL
Why not?

HADAAS
Oh, the tea! Milk or lemon?

YENTL
Yes, please.

YENTL
V.O. I MUST ADMIT THE FOOD WAS DELICIOUS AND THIS IS A COMF'TABLE ROOM

HADAAS
Which?

YENTL
Which what?

V.O. AND IF HE LIKES THE SMELL OF LILACS AND ROSES THEN MAYBE HE LIKES HER PERFUME

HADAAS
Lemon or milk?

V.O. AND THOUGH HER SILKY HAIR AND MILKY COMPLEXION ARE NICE STILL THEY'RE NOT THAT DISTRACTING

HADAAS
Anshel?

YENTL
Milky ... I mean milk.

V.O. SO WHAT ACCOUNTS FOR THE WAY HE'S BEEN ACTING?

HADAAS
Honey or sugar?

V.O. HER SOFTNESS,

HADAAS
Honey?

YENTL
No.

HADAAS
No honey.

V.O. HER SWEETNESS -

HADAAS
Sugar?

YENTL shakes her head - "yes!"

V.O. HOW COULD HE RESIST HER?

HADAAS
Almond cakes?

V.O. AND WHY WOULD HE TRY?

YENTL
How did you get them all the same size?

YENTL
V.O. NO WONDER HE WANTS HER.

HADAAS
You notice everything.

V.O. HE NEEDS HER

HADAAS
The china ...

V.O. HE LOVES HER

HADAAS
The cakes ...

V.O. NO WONDER

HADAAS
It's wonderful.

V.O. SO WOULD I.

76 INT. AVIGDOR'S ROOM NIGHT

YENTL bursts in, looking for AVIGDOR. Not there.

77 INT. YESHIVA NIGHT

YENTL races in. A STUDENT is reading. But not AVIGDOR.

78 INT. SYNAGOGUE NIGHT

YENTL bursts in. A FEW OLD MEN praying. No AVIGDOR.

79 EXT. A BECHEV STREET NIGHT

YENTL running - looking down alleyways. No AVIGDOR.

80 EXT. GENTILE SQUARE NIGHT

YENTL runs past Christian statues - still no AVIGDOR.

81 INT. TAVERN BECHEV NIGHT

It's packed with TOWNSPEOPLE and PEASANTS - drinking, raucously singing. The air is blue with tobacco smoke. YENTL enters - conspicuously out of place in her Yeshiva clothes. She walks through the room - still no AVIGDOR. Through another room - and at a corner table - sees a MAN. Looks away. Looks back. It's AVIGDOR. A little the worse for drink. She goes over to him.

YENTL
Where's your hat? Your head isn't covered!

AVIGDOR
(looks up at her, smiles)
Sit down. Have a drink. Oh, no - you won't. You won't do anything.

YENTL
What are you doing here?! I've looked every ... We've got to talk!

AVIGDOR
We've talked enough. You don't listen.

YENTL
(sits facing him)
Avigdor, I was wrong before. She's worth fighting for. Fight for her. I've just come from their house. They're deciding now on a husband for her.

AVIGDOR leaps to his feet, knocking over the table. He rushes from the tavern, flinging people aside. YENTL runs after him.

YENTL
Avigdor, talk to Vishkower! Don't lose faith! Let's go to the Yeshiva! Let's talk to the Rabbi - maybe he knows of a Law --

AVIGDOR
There are no Laws! Not for this! there's nothing I can do!
(pointedly)
There's nothing I can do.

He runs out of the tavern.

82 EXT. TAVERN COURTYARD CONTINUOUS

A pile of logs. AVIGDOR runs from the tavern, sees an AXE among the logs, picks it up and swings it around his head. He hurls it with a crack into the side of a shed. YENTL runs up, grabs him by the arms. She's in tears.

YENTL
(gently, fighting back tears)
Avigdor. Believe me, I know there could be someone else for you - maybe not as pretty, maybe not so good a cook, maybe with only brown hair ... But just as much a woman.

AVIGDOR
You'll never understand. Love of the Law, yes. That you understand. Love of learning. Maybe if you took your nose out of books, you'd know more about life. About men and women, flesh and blood. About love. How could you understand? You've never felt it.

He walks away.

CLOSE UP: YENTL. She stares after him transfixed.

Stay tight on her FACE ... totally open, totally vulnerable, as we hear HER VOICE singing very slowly, achingly:

PAPA CAN YOU HEAR ME?
PAPA ARE YOU NEAR ME?
PAPA CAN YOU HELP ME NOT BE FRIGHTENED?

Hold on her as the last note dies into silence - then CRASH CUT TO:

83 INT. VISHKOWER HOUSE MAIN HALL NIGHT

An eruption of wild, joyous MUSIC; stamping, dancing, a riot of colour, noise, laughter and movement. The wedding celebrations in full swing. A SMALL ORCHESTRA plays; GUESTS (including RABBI ZALMAN, SHIMMELE and YESHIVA BOYS) eat, drink and talk. Amid cheers and clapping, YENTL and HADAAS, in their wedding clothes, are raised high into the air on chairs and carried through the room.

YENTL is twisting and turning in her chair to try and catch a glimpse of AVIGDOR. She finally does so. He's standing a little apart from the OTHER YESHIVA BOYS. YENTL's eyes search his. He smiles, and raises his glass to her in a gesture of mazeltov. He drinks.

As is the custom, MEN are now dancing with MEN, and WOMEN with WOMEN.

From her high vantage point, YENTL watches all. She watches AVIGDOR dancing with mounting wildness - his eyes on HADAAS throughout. She sees PESHE - with eyes only for AVIGDOR. She watches the euphoric REB ALTER and ESTHER threading through the GUESTS, plying them with food and drink.

During this, CAMERA strays among the GUESTS standing at the perimeter of the dancing area. They're gossiping together while watching the dancing. Standing with them, swaying rhythmically to the music is MRS JACOBS.

1ST GUEST
Listen ... It's not a bad match. He's a nice boy. Serious.

SARAH
A nice boy? To steal his best friend's girl? Ask his best friend how nice ...

ANNA
Maybe, of the two, Avigdor's a little more manly, maybe.

1ST GUEST
So Anshel isn't manly? There's manly and manly.

ANNA
To me, Anshel is more of a gentleman, maybe.

SARAH
What do you say, Mrs Jacobs? You looked after both of them - you should know.

MRS JACOBS
You know, now, I think, I'm also going a little deaf ...

THE HANDKERCHIEF DANCE begins. This is the one dance where MEN and WOMEN dance together. It's led by the BRIDE and GROOM. OTHER COUPLES then join in. YENTL and HADAAS come shyly to the middle of the room, holding opposite ends of the handkerchief.

YENTL again looks across at AVIGDOR. She smiles tentatively. His eyes darken, accusingly - and he, very deliberately turns his back on her. YENTL's smile changes to consternation.

OTHER COUPLES are now flanking YENTL and HADAAS - and the dance begins. The closest to AVIGDOR is PESHE. She reaches across the handkerchief to pet his hand - which is forbidden. PESHE starts tugging at the handkerchief. AVIGDOR looks at her. She smiles seductively. They dance more closely together.

AVIGDOR dances close to YENTL. Both seem almost trance-like, now helplessly at the mercy of events.

YENTL
Avigdor. Talk to me.

AVIGDOR
I should be the groom here. Not you.

YENTL
You think I don't know??

AVIGDOR
The truth is ...

AVIGDOR tugs on the handkerchief and exits with PESHE.

Both YENTL and HADAAS watch them go. Suddenly REB ALTER taps YENTL on the shoulder. She turns to face him. She sees ESTHER take HADAAS' hand.

REB ALTER
Come, my children-

REB ALTER and ESTHER lead YENTL and HADAAS out of the room. GUESTS turn and clap them joyfully as they go.

84 INT. CORRIDOR VISHKOWERS' HOUSE CONTINUOUS

The sounds of revellry continue from the main hall. ESTHER and HADAAS are a few paces ahead of REB ALTER and YENTL as they walk along.

ESTHER
(nervously)
So you mustn't be nervous ...

HADAAS
No, mother.

ESTHER
What ... what happens now is your honour and ... your obligation ...

HADAAS
Yes, mother.

ESTHER
(even more nervously)
So ... as I said ... you mustn't be nervous ...

HADAAS
No, mother.

CUT TO REB ALTER and YENTL

REB ALTER
(nervously)
Sometimes, Anshel, sometimes the first night is not quite as ... It's maybe not quite as ... It's maybe not exactly what ... It's sometimes not quite how, in your mind ... Well, not just <u>sometimes</u>.

YENTL
I see.

REB ALTER
You have to be a little patient ...

YENTL
Uh ... uh.

REB ALTER
Women are different.

YENTL
So I'm told.

CUT TO ESTHER and HADAAS.

ESTHER
You see, Eve was made from Adam's rib ... to ... um ... to obey his wishes ... his demands ... And so must you. So ...
(gulps)
... so you've nothing to be nervous about!

She opens the bedroom door for HADAAS. HADAAS goes in.

CUT TO REB ALTER and YENTL approaching.

REB ALTER
(nervously)
So ... all you have to do ... is -
(quickly and embarrassedly)
- be fruitful and multiply! And may your wedding night be as joyful as ours was!

He catches a wry glance from ESTHER.

Through the open door, we see HADAAS waiting, as YENTL goes into the bedroom.;

REB ALTER
And, please God, a circumcision nine months from now ...

YENTL and HADAAS look at each other. The door closes.

85 INT. YENTL/HADAAS' BEDROOM LATER

(We still hear the muted sounds of the wedding celebrations).

C.U. of a man's stockinged FEET. CAMERA pans up, and widens to reveal YENTL behind a dressing screen. She's dressed in a long gown with white stockings and a sleeping cap. CAMERA pans to reveal HADAAS in b/g wearing a very modest nightgown, a little shawl round her shoulders. She sits on the edge of the bed. YENTL takes a deep breath, emerges from the screen, goes to a bureau for a bottle of wine and two glasses.

BRIDE and GROOM are in a state of near-panic. YENTL pours wine for them both.

YENTL
Are you too warm?

HADAAS
No.

YENTL
Shall I open a window?

HADAAS
No.
(then hastily)
Unless you want to. You're the man.

YENTL
That's true.
(beat)
You don't have to be frightened.

HADAAS
I'm not.

YENTL
You're not?

HADAAS
Well, yes, I am.

YENTL
Good.
(beat)
But you don't hve to do anything you don't want to, Hadaas.

HADAAS
I do, Anshel. You're my husband. I have to do whatever you demand.

YENTL
That's not so!

HADAAS
It's not?

YENTL
No! According to the Talmud, a woman has the right to refuse her husband. Didn't you know that?

HADAAS
No - my mother said --

YENTL
Too many women don't know the law. So if you want to refuse --

HADAAS
I didn't say --

YENTL
-- then I respect your wishes!

HADAAS
You're a very considerate man, Anshel.

YENTL
A drop more wine?
(pours wine)
You're thinking of Avigdor, aren't you?

HADAAS
No.
(beat)
Where do you think they went?

YENTL
You mustn't be angry with him ...

HADAAS
What?

YENTL
Well, any woman would be, wouldn't she? Who was so close to him ...

HADAAS
You're very understanding.

YENTL
It's only natural ... You're still in love with him and you wish he were here instead of me ...

HADAAS
You're my husband, Anshel.

YENTL
... So the thing is, Hadaas, the thing is -- since you're thinking of Avigdor, I'm not going to let you commit an unnecessary sin.

HADAAS
Sin?

YENTL
Oh, yes, it's very clearly written that a woman can't give herself to a man if she's still thinking of another. You didn't know that?

HADAAS
I don't think that's what I'm thinking ...

YENTL
Oh, it's a terrible sin, believe me!
So, tonight, we'll do what you want.
Which is nothing. I understand.

HADAAS
Anshel, I don't know what I want!

YENTL
Well, when you do, let me know. So,
even though you're very hard to resist,
I'm not going to force myself on you ...
I'll just have to be patient.

HADAAS
Good.

YENTL
Good.
(pours more wine)
It's our secret - no one needs to know.

HADAAS
(raising her glass)
Our secret!

YENTL
(raising her glass)
And friendship.

HADAAS
A husband and wife can be friends?

YENTL
Oh, yes.

They drink.

Only one problem ...

She suddenly starts messing up the sheets of one of the beds. HADAAS stares at her, mystified.

HADAAS
What are you doing??

YENTL
Help me. In the morning, when they
come in ... they'll think we've --

HADAAS
(giggling)
But we haven't!

YENTL
Ssssh! Secret!

Laughing, HADAAS enthusiastically starts messing up the other bed.

YENTL
No, no! Just one bed!

HADAAS
(laughing all the more)
Oh, of course!

They mess up the sheets, violently. During this, YENTL deliberately spills wine on the sheets. They laugh more and more as the tension evaporates. Sheets and pillows begin to fly.

86 INT. CORRIDOR VISHKOWERS' HOUSE CONTINUOUS

REB ALTER and ESTHER are passing, nervously. They hear the noise and laughter from inside the bedroom. They glance at each other.

REB ALTER
(shrugs)
You tell me ...

87 INT. YENTL/HADASS' BEDROOM A LITTLE LATER

Both GIRLS falls onto their individual beds, out of breath, their laughter simmering down. A pause.

HADAAS
Anshel?

YENTL
Mmm?

HADAAS
I think I'm going to like being married to you.

She reaches her hand across to Yentl's.

YENTL
Goodnight, Hadaas.

HADAAS
Goodnight.

And she burps. As she begins to fall asleep, holding Yentl's hand across the bed, YENTL breathes an enormous sigh of relief and blows out the candles.

88 EXT. BECHEV STREETS & MARKETPLACE THE NEXT MORNING

YENTL is walking through the arch down the busy, populated street towards the market. As she does so, AVIGDOR comes out of Mrs Jacobs' house. He sees her. She sees him. They walk towards each other, searching each other's eyes, tensely. They meet.

AVIGDOR
Hello, Anshel.

ANSHEL
Good morning, Avigdor.

AVIGDOR
(tentatively)
How are you ... this morning?

YENTL
Well.

AVIGDOR
Good.

YENTL
You?

AVIGDOR
How's Hadaas?

YENTL
Well. How's Peshe?

A pause. AVIGDOR wrestles for words.

AVIGDOR
The ... um ... the wedding ... Everyone seemed to have a good time ...

YENTL
Yes, everyone stayed very late. Almost everyone.

AVIGDOR
(a pause)
Hadaas ... enjoyed herself?

YENTL
Did Peshe?

AVIGDOR
We're talking about Hadaas!

YENTL
You are! Me - I seem to be talking about Peshe!

PESHE (O.S.)
Avigdor! Avigdor!

YENTL and AVIGDOR turn. PESHE has run out onto the doorstep of her store to attract Avigdor's attention.

AVIGDOR
(to Yentl)
I'll be right back.

He goes over to PESHE. YENTL stands, irritated, watching Avigdor in earnest conversation with PESHE -- seemingly consoling her.

BOOKSELLER (O.S.)
Don't I know you?

YENTL spins round - to come face to face with the BOOKSELLER from Yanev. They're standing beside his bookstall and book-laden horse. His eyes pierce into YENTL's.

BOOKSELLER
Was it in Zamosc? I seem to remember some ... something ... we were ...

YENTL
I've never been to Zamosc!

BOOKSELLER
Somewhere else, then, maybe ...

YENTL
Nowhere!

BOOKSELLER
Perhaps I can interest you in a book?

YENTL
No, thanks. I'm not much of a reader.

AVIGDOR strides up to her, and grabs her arm.

AVIGDOR
Come on.

They walk off through the marketplace.

BOOKSELLER
(calling after them)
Some little village ... Yanev ... some-place like that ...?

YENTL and AVIGDOR walk on for a moment, then AVIGDOR resumes their conversation, in restrained agitation.

AVIGDOR
Tell me, Anshel ... what was it like?

YENTL
Oh, the usual. Music, dancing, lots of food --

AVIGDOR
Last night!! With Hadaas! Tell me!

YENTL
You tell me about Peshe!

AVIGDOR
For God's sake - it's like a Cossack Inquisition ...

YENTL
Good. Now you know how I feel!

89 EXT. RIVER BANK SOME MINUTES LATER

YENTL and AVIGDOR walking along.

AVIGDOR
Alright! Alright! Peshe and I did everything! Naked! For hours! Here - by the river. It was like Paradise!

YENTL
Mazeltov.

AVIGDOR
And you - you and Hadaas?

YENTL
Like Paradise only better. Like Paradise baked in cinnamon and honey. With marzipan icing.

CUT TO TWO YOUNG WOMEN, seated by the river, watching YENTL and AVIGDOR passing some yards away.

1ST YOUNG WOMAN
Yeshive Boys! Talmud, Talmud, Talmud. All they ever talk about ...

CUT BACK TO YENTL and AVIGDOR.

AVIGDOR
(sighs, despondently)
I walked her back to the bakery. She kissed me. I didn't like it. I went home.

YENTL
Oh.
(beat)
Hadaas and I talked. We laughed a little. Well, a lot. Then we went to sleep.

AVIGDOR
Anshel, please. I'm a grown man. Tell me the truth!

YENTL
Why is it people who want the truth never believe it when they get it?

AVIGDOR
What you did to her!

YENTL
I did nothing!

AVIGDOR
Tell me!

YENTL
What do you think I did?

AVIGDOR
(pause; then slowly)
You kissed her. Caressed her. Stroked the --

YENTL
That's right.

AVIGDOR
What?

YENTL
All that. Like you said.

AVIGDOR
And did she scream?

YENTL
She did a little screaming, then we went to sleep.

AVIGDOR
And did she moan? Tell me she moaned!

YENTL
She moaned. She moaned.

AVIGDOR
Oh, God ...!

YENTL
"Avigdor", she moaned ...

AVIGDOR
What??

YENTL sits down on the grass, pensively. AVIGDOR hurriedly sits down beside her. She looks at him, tenderly.

AVIGDOR
Go on!

YENTL
She moaned "Avigdor, my darling." Things like that. Like in story-books. Women's books.

AVIGDOR
Go on ...

YENTL
(looks into his eyes)
She said "Avigdor, I love you".

AVIGDOR
"I love you".

YENTL
"I adore you, Avigdor".

AVIGDOR
And that's the truth?

YENTL
(close to tears; smiles at him)
Oh, yes, my friend. That's the truth.

AVIGDOR lies back and sighs. YENTL bites back tears.

90 INT. VISHKOWERS' KITCHEN LATE AFTERNOON

REB ALTER, carrying clean clothes, is on his way to the Bath House. ESTHER is at a steaming kettle, making raspberry tea.

REB ALTER
The whole pleasure of having a son-in-law is to go the bath-house with him ...

He sighs in frustrated irritation.

ESTHER
(placatory)
If he has a headache, he has a head-ache ...

REB ALTER
In the bath-house, you sit... You talk. Discuss life. That's a son-in-law.

ESTHER
(resigned)
What can you do ...

REB ALTER
This week he can't come because he has a headache, last week because he's studying ...

ESTHER
What can you do ...

REB ALTER
You know what gives him the headache in the first place?

ESTHER
Studying.

REB ALTER
Thankyou. So what can you do ...

ESTHER
You tell me.

REB ALTER exits, sighing. ESTHER watches him go, then pours a glass of tea.

91 INT. VISHKOWERS' HOUSE LIVING ROOM CONTINUOUS

HADAAS is seated on the sofa, working a small lace loom -- the knots delicate and precise. ESTHER enters, carrying a glass of tea on a tray. Smiles worriedly at HADAAS. HADASS smiles back, continues working.

ESTHER
When I was young it was the women who had the headache ...

HADAAS
What?

ESTHER
Raspberry tea is very good for headaches.

HADAAS
Yes, mother.

ESTHER
(a beat; then embarrassedly)
So it ... um ... so is something else ...
(a beat)
That also cures headaches ...

HADAAS
(still baffled)
What does?

ESTHER
That's one of the reasons why God says it's a blessing ... especially on the Sabbath. It's nature. Between man and wife.

HADAAS
(amused - perhaps even a little shocked)
Mother! What are you saying!

ESTHER
(embarrassed)
That you give him a glass of raspberry tea! Everything I say you find hidden meanings ...

She hands HADAAS the tray.

92 INT. YENTL/HADAAS' BEDROOM LATER

YENTL is at a table, buried in her books. The door opens and HADAAS enters, with the tray bearing the glass of tea.

HADAAS
Am I disturbing you?

YENTL
(smiles)
No.;

HADAAS
Good.

A pause.

Soon be sundown. The Sabbath.

YENTL
Yes.

HADAAS
My mother says it's a special blessing on the Sabbath.

YENTL
(puzzled)
Going to the synagogue?

HADAAS
What?

YENTL
Going to the bath-house?

HADAAS
Going to bed.

YENTL
(understanding)
Ah.

HADAAS
(hastily)
Unless you're tired.

YENTL
What?

HADAAS hands her the glass of tea.

HADAAS
Drink your tea. It's raspberry.
(beat)
You know, when Avigdor used to call, I sometimes spilled things. I don't know if you ever noticed?

YENTL
No. Never.

HADAAS
He frightened me really. I always felt he was going to eat me up or something. He made me tremble.

YENTL
Tremble?

HADAAS
Inside.

YENTL
That's love, Hadaas.

HADAAS
No, Anshel. Because you don't make me tremble. You're so gentle. You make me peaceful. It's nice.

YENTL
(hastily)
Yes ... yes, that's the friendship I was telling you about - between man and wife. You see, in the Talmud, a wife is described as a friend, which, in turn, can be interpreted as a peaceful sort of --

HADAAS
So ... will you ... teach me?

YENTL
Teach you?

HADAAS
Please.

YENTL
The Talmud?

HADAAS
Not the Talmud!

YENTL
(leaping to her feet)
It's the least I can do for you!
(shrugs)
The most, even, maybe ...

HADAAS
I could never learn Talmud!

YENTL
Nonsense! If I can, you can.

HADAAS
Isn't it a sin?! I thought women were forbidden to st --- What'll people think?!

YENTL
People, always, people! Lock the door!

YENTL is by now crossing the room and closing the curtains. HADAAS goes to lock the door.

HADAAS
Anshel, if it isn't a sin, why am I locking the door and you closing the curtains?

YENTL
Because God understands - but I'm not so sure about the neighbours.

She smiles at the memory. HADAAS watches in amazement as YENTL excitedly selects a book, then brings another chair next to hers at the table. YENTL pats the chair indicating that HADAAS should sit down. HADAAS' amazement turns to amusement. She laughs.

YENTL
What's funny?

HADAAS
You! I've never seen you so excited!

YENTL
We start with the Bible, the Five Books of Moses which God handed down on Mount Sinai ...

HADAAS
Well, I'm sorry they'll have to wait ...

She opens the door.

YENTL
Where are you going?

HADAAS
(laughing)
Anshel ... I have the soup on the stove, then I have to glaze the bread ...

YENTL
(locking the door again)
Let Sophie do it.
(resumes)
Now ... the Talmud, on the other hand, is a series of commentaries interpreting the Bible ... What are you doing?

HADAAS
Pulling a thread from my hem.

YENTL
Well, don't.

HADAAS
What?

YENTL
We're studying.

HADAAS
Oh. Yes, Anshel.

YENTL
Now, the first of these is called the Mishnah, our code of law ... the laws that teach us how to live ...

HADAAS
I'm glad your headache's better.

MIX TO

93 INT. YENTL/HADAAS' BEDROOM LATER THAT NIGHT

YENTL is pacing the room, book in hand. HADAAS is still in her chair. CAMERA starts on her back and tracks round to discover that her eyes are closed and she's struggling against overpowering sleep.

YENTL
... which is a masterpiece of literature, folklore and philosophy. The Gomorah is the commentary on the

YENTL (Cont)
Mishnah - and, as such, deals with astronomy, architecture, medicine, religion -- everything from ...

HADAAS
Go on .. I'm still listening ...

YENTL
... from making love to planting Egyptian beans ...

HADAAS
(opens her eyes)
Making love?

YENTL
To planting Egyptian beans ...

HADAAS
Let's do the bit about making love.

YENTL
Then we come to the Midrash. Legends, stories, demonstrating legal issues ...

HADAAS settles down to sleep again.

For example. Two men are disputing the ownership of a flock of chickens and --

HADAAS gets up, yawning helplessly, and goes over to her bed.

HADAAS
Anshel. While your books argue about chickens -- I've had to pluck them.
(curls up on her bed)
It's Friday. I've been up since dawn. I've plucked chickens, gutted them, cooked them, helped Sophie fire the oven, made dough, sanded the floors, scrubbed the tables and ... and ... and I'm too tired to be a scholar on Fridays, Anshel. I'm sorry.

YENTL
(smiles, soberly)
I understand, Hadaas. I'm sorry.

HADAAS
(beginning to fall asleep)
I'm too tired to even take my clothes off ... Even too tired for the special Sabbath blessing ... if, maybe, you were going to demand it ... and force yourself on me ...

She falls asleep. YENTL looks across at her, tenderly.

YENTL
Goodnight. Lovely Hadaas.

94 INT. YESHIVA CLASSROOM DAY

A class is in session, supervised by RABBI ZALMAN. AVIGDOR whispers to YENTL.

AVIGDOR
When do you think I can visit?

YENTL
This Tuesday.

AVIGDOR
Will her parents allow it?

YENTL
I don't care if they don't! I'll tell them straight out - I insist on Avigdor coming to dinner and that's that!
(beat)
Anyway, they'll be away on Tuesday.

RABBI ZALMAN
(calling)
Are you two making progress down there?

AVIGDOR
Oh, yes, Rabbi Zalman. Without doubt.

95 INT. YENTL/HADAAS/BEDROOM/
EXT. STREET DAY

HADAAS is sitting reading a book at the window. She glances down - and from her POV, through the window, we see YENTL and AVIGDOR walking along the street in animated discussion, oblivious to everything around them - including the puddles they're walking in.

Suddenly AVIGDOR glances up at the window. HADAAS at once pulls back from sight. YENTL and AVIGDOR continue round the corner, still disputing.

96 INT. VISHKOWERS' HOUSE DINING ROOM EVENING

SOPHIE is setting three places for dinner. We hear the clock chime six times.

97 INT. YENTL/HADAAS' BEDROOM CONTINUOUS

YENTL is sitting at a chess board, studying the pieces. HADAAS is changing for dinner behind a screen. She peeps round and notices YENTL check the time on her pocket watch. HADAAS smiles.

HADAAS
He's one second late.

YENTL
Mmm?
(beat)
Oh.
(laughs)
Yes.

HADAAS disappears behind the screen again.

YENTL
Be ... be pleasant to him, Hadaas, won't you? I won't mind.

HADAAS
I read a beautiful story today. David and Jonathan.

YENTL
(a little nervously)
I thought you were reading the Book of Job ...?

HADAAS
All about their love being stronger than a man and a woman's.
(pops her head round again)
The Book of Job was <u>yesterday</u> ...

YENTL
Oh.

HADAAS disappears behind the screen again. CAMERA stays on her, as we hear the front doorbell ringing.

HADAAS
(smiling)
Who do <u>you</u> love more - me or Avigdor?

She steps out from behind the screen. Yentl's chair is empty, the door wide open. We hear Yentl's FOOTSTEPS starting down the stairs.

98 INT. VISHKOWERS' HALLWAY CONTINUOUS

AVIGDOR stands nervously in the middle of the hall, clutching a small bouquet of flowers. He turns, in anticipation, on hearing footsteps at the top of the stairs.

It's YENTL racing down - happy, excited. AVIGDOR's anticipation fades a little.

On reaching AVIGDOR, YENTL immediately starts showing him one of the books - the one she bought from the bookseller in Yanev.

YENTL
This is the one I was telling you about. That I brought from home. The first part's about the ancient mystics -- it's all a bit elementary but it --

She breaks off on seeing that AVIGDOR's attention has returned to the top of the staircase. YENTL turns to follow his look.

CUT to HADAAS descending the stairs - looking ravishing. She smiles confidently.

HADAAS
Welcome, Avigdor.

AVIGDOR
(softly)
Thankyou, Hadaas.

YENTL
(resuming - a little impatiently)
Now the second part has all these Midrashim - some aren't all that accurately translated - but they ---

AVIGDOR
(to Hadaas)
It's nicer now ... isn't it ... with the weather changing ...?

HADAAS
Yes. It's always nice ... when it changes ...

AVIGDOR hands her the bouquet.

Thankyou

YENTL
Anyway, it's a marvellous book. Don't buy it, though. You can borrow it.

SOPHIE enters from the dining room.

SOPHIE
Dinner is served, ma'am.

99 INT. VISHKOWERS' DINING ROOM LATER

The remnants of a finished meal on the table. HAADAS. YENTL and AVIGDOR seated at the table.

YENTL is coming to the end of a story. HADAAS, smiling, is waiting on his every word. AVIGDOR feels left out - and YENTL is aware of it.

HADAAS
(to Yentl)
And then what happened?

YENTL
Avigdor was there as well. He'll tell you.

HADAAS
(brief smile at Avigdor)
Yes?
(then to Yentl)
And was Rabbi Zalman angry or did he laugh?

YENTL
(to Avigdor)
He laughed, didn't he, Avigdor?

AVIGDOR
Yes, he thought it was --

HADAAS
(interrupting: to Yentl)
And did <u>you</u> laugh?

AVIGDOR
We <u>both</u> did ...

HADAAS
(to Yentl; laughing)
I can just see you!

To prevent further discomfort for Avigdor, YENTL leaps to her feet and starts collecting dirty dishes.

HADAAS
Anshel! That's women's work!

YENTL
Women, men. What difference?

HADAAS
You have a guest ...

YENTL
So have you.

YENTL exits to kitchen with dishes. A silence. AVIGDOR gazes at HADAAS. She lowers her eyes.

AVIGDOR
Marriage agrees with you. You're more beautiful than ever.

She throws a quick glance at him, then lowers her eyes again. A pause. She looks at him. Smiles.

HADAAS
Avigdor ... I have a secret.

AVIGDOR
(hopes rising)
Tell me.

HADAAS
Don't tell Anshel I told you.

AVIGDOR
Does he know it?

HADAAS
Oh, yes.

AVIGDOR
(understanding - or thinking he does)
Then it's our secret - all three of us.

HADAAS
(brimming with pleasure)
I'm studying the Talmud!

A beat - then AVIGDOR bursts out laughing. HADAAS is deeply hurt.

What's funny about the Talmud?

AVIGDOR
It's not the --
(smiles fading)
I'm ... I'm sorry.
(uneasy pause)
That's wonderful. 'Good.

YENTL enters with a tray of tea-things. Senses the atmosphere. Looks from one to the other.

YENTL
Let's have our tea by the fire.

She starts for the door with her tray, followed by AVIGDOR. They're momentarily jammed together in the doorway.

You get the books, Avigdor. We'll read a few chapters, then discuss them, yes?

100 INT. VISHKOWER'S PARLOUR CONTINUOUS

HADAAS gestures AVIGDOR to sit down. He does so.

HADAAS
Will I be in the way if I sit and listen ... or shall I go and help Sophie to ---

AVIGDOR
No, no, stay. You might help us ... in the discussion.

AVIGDOR throws a glance at YENTL. YENTL looks at HADAAS, suspiciously. She hands a glass of tea to AVIGDOR.

YENTL
Milk or lemon?

AVIGDOR
(gazing at Hadaas)
Whatever.

YENTL passes the glass and spills tea on the white tablecloth. HADAAS promptly throws a handkerchief over the stain. They all exchange a quick glance.

YENTL and HADAAS sit down. YENTL and AVIGDOR pick up their books. HADAAS is concerned about Yentl's suspicions and keeps glancing at her ... puts her hand on Yentl's. YENTL pulls it away -- while glancing at AVIGDOR hoping Hadaas' behaviour isn't spoiling his visit. AVIGDOR keeps glancing at HADAAS -- hoping he's been forgiven for laughing.

HADAAS picks up some sewing, and starts to hum a tune softly as she sews.

YENTL (V.O.)
LOOK AT HOW HE LOOKS AT HER
WILL SOMEONE EVER LOOK AT ME THAT WAY?
FULL OF ALL THE FEELINGS AND THE SOFT UNSPOKEN
WORDS THAT LOVERS SAY?
I THOUGHT THAT I KNEW EV'RY SINGLE LOOK
AND SWEET EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE
YET THIS IS ONE THAT I DON'T RECOGNIZE
ALTHOUGH I'VE SAT AND STUDIED HIM FOR HOURS
BUT NOW I SEE HOW LOVE COMPLETELY OCCUPIES
A PAIR OF EYES.

AVIGDOR
A pretty melody, Hadaas.

HADAAS
My mother taught it to me. Her mother taught it to her.

YENTL (V.O.)
SEE THE WAY THEY GAZE AT HER
LIKE SLAVES THEY FOLLOW EV'RYWHERE SHE GOES
DO MY EYES FORGET THEMSELVES -
AND DO I EVER LOOK AT HIM
AND SMILE IN SUCH A WAY
THAT WHAT I'M FEELING SHOWS?
SOMETIMES I HAVE THE FEELING EV'RYBODY KNOWS.

AND EVEN THOUGH IT'S CRAZY
STILL I CAN'T HELP WONDERING IF I'LL EVER LIVE TO SEE THE DAY
WHEN BY SOME MIRACLE OF MIRACLES HE'LL TURN AROUND
AND LOOK AT ME THAT WAY.

AVIGDOR suddenly leaps to his feet, very distraught.

AVIGDOR
I'm sorry ... it's no good ... I can't be in the same room with her ... it's impossible.

He blunders from the room. YENTL starts after him. HADAAS puts her hand on Yentl's and stops her. YENTL turns to her ... as we hear the front door slam closed.

101 INT. YENTL/HADAAS' BEDROOM LATER THAT NIGHT

The room is lit by two candles on a table between the two beds. YENTL is lying on her bed, reading. HADAAS lies on her own bed, also reading Silence for a moment, then -

HADAAS
Anshel?

YENTL
(still reading)
Mmm?

HADAAS
How many children do you want?

YENTL
(turns)
I ... I don't know.

HADAAS
(smiles)
He didn't make me tremble.

YENTL
Who?

HADAAS
<u>You</u> did, though.
(beat)
What's even nicer, <u>I</u> made <u>you</u> tremble ...

YENTL
What?

HADAAS
When he was leaving and you tried to stop him. I put my hand on yours ... you were trembling.

She gets up, sits on Yentl's bed, takes off Yentl's glasses.

YENTL
(warily)
What are you doing?

HADAAS
I want to look at you.

YENTL gulps. Hadaas begins to stroke Yentl's hair.

When you told me I had the right to refuse you ... you didn't tell me I also have the right to demand you ...

YENTL
Who ... who told you that?

HADAAS
(smiles)
The Talmud. The Yibamote Tractate - I forget what page ...

YENTL
63.a. and b.

HADAAS
It's written, Anshel.

YENTL
I think you've been studying too hard ...

HADAAS
Anshel. You told me to tell you when I knew what I wanted. Well, I do. And it isn't Avigdor. So it's no longer a sin.
(strokes Yentl's cheek)
So smooth. I hope you never grow a beard.
(brushes her cheek against Yentl's)
It doesn't scratch.
(gets closer, traces Yentl's mouth with her fingertips)
Such full lips. As full as mine.

YENTL
Many men have --

HADAAS
See if they fit.

She pulls YENTL towards her and kisses her on the lips. YENTL finally breaks ... and begins to cry softly, helplessly.

YENTL
Oh, Hadaas ...

HADAAS
Ssshhh ... It's been terrible for you, I know. All this waiting. But it's all right now. You've no need to be patient any more.

YENTL
I'm sorry ... Oh, my God, I'm so sorry ...

HADAAS
For what? Teaching me? Not laughing at me? Respecting me? Making me happy? Making me fall in love with you?
(a beat)
Kiss me.
(she kisses Yentl)
Hold me.
(she holds Yentl)
Caress me.
(she caresses Yentl)
Ssshhh, my husband.

YENTL looks at her and reaches a decision. She holds Hadaas' face in both hands.

YENTL
Hadaas. I make you a promise. I promise that soon - very soon - you'll have everything you want. Beautiful children - as <u>many</u> as you want. I promise to make you happy. Tomorrow things change.
(holds Hadaas close)
Trust me.

HADAAS
I do. I do.

YENTL
Close your eyes now. I'll hold you till you fall asleep.

102 EXT. STREET LEADING TO SYNAGOGUE DAY

Among the PASSERSBY are YENTL and HADAAS on their way to the synagogue. PEOPLE smile greetings at them. They smile back.

AVIGDOR walks quickly past them.

AVIGDOR
(a little shamefacedly)
Good shabbos.

YENTL/HADAAS
Good shabbos, Avigdor.

Avoiding their eyes, AVIGDOR makes his way into the synagogue. YENTL and HADAAS follows him in.

103 INT. BECHEV SYNAGOGUE A FEW MOMENTS LATER DAY

The service is in progress. MEN pray, chant, sway: sudden crescendos, sudden murmured lows. YENTL and AVIGDOR pray side by side ... YENTL continually glancing at AVIGDOR, with concern.

Above, in the womens' section, is HADAAS. Watching them both.

YENTL
Avigdor?

AVIGDOR
Mmm?

YENTL
I'm going to Lublin for two or three days to buy some books.

AVIGDOR
Uh-uh.

YENTL
Would you like to come?

AVIGDOR
I'm thinking of getting married.

YENTL
What?

AVIGDOR
I need a woman, Anshel.

YENTL
Listen - come to Lublin! We'll talk.
I have something to tell you.

AVIGDOR
(praying)
Mmm?

YENTL
I'll tell you on the way.

AVIGDOR
(irritated: can't hear properly)
Tell me what?

YENTL
It's a secret!

The chanting of the MEN drowns her reply.

AVIGDOR
A what??

YENTL
(loudly)
A secret!!

The CONGREGATION and RABBI all turn towards YENTL. She smiles weakly round at them all.

104 INT. YENTL/HADAAS' BEDROOM DAY

YENTL is packing her clothes into an old straw suitcase. On top of them she places her prayer-shawl, yarmulke and the book from Yanev. HADAAS stands watching.

HADAAS
I'll miss you.

YENTL
Two or three days? You'll forget all about me!
(Hadaas laughs)
People may talk ...

HADAAS
It doesn't matter.

YENTL
(smiles; then)
Let's see ... do I have everything?
(pause)
I think so.

She closes the suitcase, and takes it from the room. HADAAS follows.

105 INT. VISHKOWERS' HOUSE HALL CONTINUOUS

YENTL, with her suitcase, goes down the stairs with HADAAS.

YENTL
Tell your parents I'm sorry.

HADAAS
Sorry?

YENTL
(evasively)
That ... that I wasn't here when they got home.

HADAAS
You'll see them on Friday. You can tell us all about the big city.

YENTL is about to open the front door.

Oh, I almost forgot! I have a surprise for you!

She runs to the kitchen. YENTL watches her go, looks round the hall.

YENTL SINGS THE REPRISE OF "NO WONDER".

HADAAS returns with a basket in her hand.

HADAAS
A picnic for two! And - for dessert - fresh cream cakes! You'd never last three days without my cream cakes ...

YENTL
Thankyou.

YENTL opens the door and steps outside.

106 EXT. VISHKOWERS' HOUSE CONTINUOUS DAY

A horse and wagon are standing outside the house. YENTL comes from the house and puts her suitcase on the back of the wagon. HADAAS stands in the doorway.

HADAAS
Have a good journey. I'll study while you're away. You'll be proud of me.

YENTL
Hadaas, I <u>am</u> proud of you. You should be proud of yourself. Avigdor was right, you're a wonderful girl.

HADAAS
I love you.

YENTL
I love you, too.

They embrace. YENTL gets into the seat and drives off down the street. She turns and waves, HADAAS waves back. A poignant moment for YENTL.

107 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE MRS JACOBS' HOUSE CONTINUOUS

AVIGDOR is waiting outside Mrs Jacobs' house. YENTL drives up and stops. AVIGDOR slings his suitcase into the back and climbs up beside YENTL.

AVIGDOR
Ready?

YENTL
Ready.

They drive off.

108 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD DAY

YENTL and AVIGDOR riding along in the wagon.

AVIGDOR
So my crazy plan was crazy, after all, wasn't it?

YENTL
No.

AVIGDOR
She's in love with you now.

YENTL
She thinks she is.

AVIGDOR
What?

YENTL
Things aren't always what they seem.

AVIGDOR
What are you talking about?

YENTL
You'll see.

She looks up. A BIRD is flying - in the same direction as they're going. YENTL smiles. Looks at AVIGDOR.

AVIGDOR
When are you going to tell me your secret?

YENTL
As a great philosopher once said --
"Never tell a secret before lunch."

109 EXT. A RIVER BANK DAY LATER

YENTL and AVIGDOR are sitting on the bank - eating Hadaas' cream cakes. Nearby the HORSE is drinking from the river.

AVIGDOR
(sighs deeply)
God ... it's good to be out of Bechev.
Away from everything.
(turns to Yentl)
So what's this secret of yours?

YENTL'S FACE suddenly contorts into a silent scream.

AVIGDOR
What's wrong?!

YENTL points in terror. AVIGDOR looks. It's a lizard. He laughs and picks it up by the tail.

YENTL
Avigdor!

AVIGDOR
(laughing)
You don't like lizards?

YENTL
No!!

He brings it suddenly near her face. She screams, gets up, runs. AVIGDOR laughs.

AVIGDOR
A little thing like this?

YENTL
Don't come near me with it! Please!

AVIGDOR
Why are you running like that?

YENTL
Like what?

AVIGDOR
Like a girl!

Still holding the lizard, he runs after her, tackles her to the ground and pins her arms down. The lizard scurries away. AVIGDOR stares down at her, breathing hard, and suddenly has an

impulse to kiss her. Confusion covers his face. YENTL - breathless - looks up at him. A long moment, then AVIGDOR gets up and brushes himself down.

AVIGDOR
We'd better go. I want to get there before dark.

They walk silently towards the wagon.

110 EXT. LUBLIN LATE AFTERNOON

The wagon crosses the expansive stone bridge into Lublin. It's almost hit by an electric tram. YENTL and AVIGDOR look around them - in wonder.

111 EXT. LUBLIN STREETS A LITTLE LATER

The wagon trundles through the streets. YENTL and AVIGDOR - awestruck by the life and size of the city, its fashionably - dressed PEOPLE, its stores, the magnificence of its architecture.

112 INT. INN LUBLIN EVENING

It's crowded with MERCHANTS sorting and packing their wares; OTHERS exchanging money. A general hubbub.

AVIGDOR and YENTL enter with their cases. The LANDLORD greets them.

LANDLORD
Sholem aleichem!

AVIGDOR/YENTL
Aleichem sholem!

YENTL
Two rooms, please.

AVIGDOR looks at her, askance.

LANDLORD
Two? You want to bring street women in?

YENTL
What?

AVIGDOR
No.

LANDLORD
Then why two? You don't like each other?

AVIGDOR
One's fine. One room, please.

113 INT. BEDROOM AT THE INN LUBLIN A LITTLE LATER

YENTL is unpacking her case on the sofa. AVIGDOR is unpacking his on the bed. He takes a bottle of brandy from the case, and holds it up as though in invitation.

AVIGDOR
Schlivowitz?

YENTL
No, thanks.

AVIGDOR
(as an extra incentive)
Kosher for Passover!

YENTL
No, thanks.

AVIGDOR
(pouring brandy for himself)
So ... let's hear this secret of yours.

YENTL looks at him. Begins to tremble slightly.

YENTL
Maybe I <u>will</u> have a glass.

AVIGDOR
Good.

He pours another glass of brandy, hands it to YENTL. They drink. YENTL then begins to pace up and down.

YENTL
Avigdor. What would you do if all you wanted in life was to study -- and it was forbidden?

AVIGDOR
It isn't forbidden!

YENTL
If it was.

AVIGDOR
But it isn't!

YENTL
If ... if there was a crazy law that said ... that said all men with brown eyes ... called Avigdor ... were forbidden to study. What would you do?

AVIGDOR
(laughs)
I'd join a circus. Go on, what's your secret?

YENTL
I'll tell you what you'd do. You'd study anyway. You'd pass yourself off as someone else ... with blue eyes ... called Anshel or something ... You'd disguise yourself as someone who --

AVIGDOR
Anshel, what the hell are you babbling about?

YENTL
(a beat)
Avigdor ... my name isn't Anshel.

AVIGDOR
(sarcastic)
Uh-uh.

YENTL
Dear Avigdor! I don't know how to tell you ...!

AVIGDOR
Well, don't! I'll guess!
(thinks)
Um ...

YENTL
I'm not a Yeshiva boy, Avigdor.

AVIGDOR
(clicks fingers)
That's it! You're the Chief Rabbi of Lithuania! Am I warm?

YENTL
I'm not any kind of boy.

AVIGDOR
(thinking again)
Not the Chief Rabbi ... alright ...
(clicks fingers again)
The Pope! You're Pope Pius the Third!

YENTL
My name's not Anshel. It's Yentl.

AVIGDOR
Yentl.

YENTL
I'm not a Yeshiva boy. I'm not any kind of boy.
(a beat)
I'm a woman.

AVIGDOR
(a statement)
A woman.

YENTL
A woman.

AVIGDOR
Right - now, my secret! I don't know how to tell you this either -- but I'm the Emperor of Japan. Sorry, sorry! The Empress.

YENTL
(solemnly; in careful, measured tones)
I'm not Anshel. I'm Yentl. I'm not a man. I'm a woman.

AVIGDOR
(frightened)
Stop it ... Stop this, Anshel ...

YENTL
I'm a woman, Avigdor.

AVIGDOR
Anshel .. I don't like it ...

She stands facing him, tears in her eyes. Slowly she takes off her gabardine and fringed garment.

What are you doing?

Then she takes off her underclothes and exposes her breasts. AVIGDOR turns white. He stares at her for a long moment.

(to himself)
Oh, God ... oh, my God ...

He begins to tremble and shake. YENTL watches paralysed. He starts to back away from her.

YENTL
(moving towards him)
Avigdor, listen to me ...

AVIGDOR
Don't come near me.

YENTL
Let me explain ...

AVIGDOR
Don't touch me ... Dear God, oh, my God ...

Overcome by dry heaves, he rushes blindly from the room.

114 INT. INN CONTINUOUS

AVIGDOR plunges down the stairs, crashing past MERCHANTS, and runs out of the door.

115 EXT. COURTYARD OF INN CONTINUOUS

AVIGDOR races from the door of the inn to the iron gates. He crashes into them and grips the iron bars, like a prisoner in a cell. He's heaving, sweating, shaking violently.

AVIGDOR
Oh, my God ... no wonder ...

YENTL (O.S.)
Avigdor ...

He ignores her. She's standing behind him.

AVIGDOR
No wonder ...

Tears come to his eyes.

YENTL
(almost inarticulately; almost to herself)
A little village ... Yanev ... behind closed curtains ... we always closed the curtains ... He understood, my father understood ... ever since I was a child ... When he died ... What could I do when he died? ... Grow old in Yanev? ... All the questions ... No one now to give me answers ... And then there was you, Avigdor ... at the Inn, the same day as me ... and everything changed ... I should've

YENTL (Cont)
gone to another town ... but how could I have known that ... I didn't want that ... I never wanted that ...

116 INT. BEDROOM AT THE INN DAWN IS BREAKING

AVIGDOR is staring out of the window, bleakly into space, YENTL is packing her suitcase.

YENTL
That's all, Avigdor. There's nothing more to say.

She starts towards the door with her suitcase. Suddenly -- and frighteningly -- AVIGDOR leaps across to her, grabs her suitcase, and hurls it against the wall. It bursts open and its contents fly all over the room.

He starts to circle round her like a mad dervish, screaming uncontrollably.

AVIGDOR
Evil! A monster! Sins! Sins upon sins! A demon! Evil! A demon! Sins upon sins upon sins! Every commandment broken! Every second ... every day ... every night! A devil! You spit on the Torah!

YENTL
I love the Torah.

AVIGDOR
To spit on it! To spit on everything! On everyone! In God's face! In Hadaas' face! On nature itself! What about Hadaas!!?

YENTL
Hadaas knows nothing. Innocent.

AVIGDOR
Innocent?! Married to a devil!?

He continues circling, jabbing her, poking her with each sentence.

Come on, Anshel! Now I want answers! You're a man - answer me like a man! Why did you do all this! Why! I want to know why! Why!

YENTL
(hysterically)
It was your plan!

AVIGDOR
Mine?? This?! This is my doing??
Why did you do it! Why! Why!

YENTL
Because you wanted her! To give
you her! It was the plan!

AVIGDOR
Why didn't you tell me you were
a woman!

YENTL
I was afraid!

AVIGDOR
Of what?!

YENTL
Of this! Of exactly this!

AVIGDOR
You lied to me! To Hadaas! You
deceived me! You deceived Hadaas!
You're a devil! You're a demon!

YENTL
I'm a woman.

AVIGDOR
That's no answer! Tell me the
answer!

YENTL
I loved you.
(a beat)
I loved you.

She starts to cry. He takes her in his arms, holds her.

AVIGDOR
No wonder ... Oh, my God ... no
wonder - we were so close ... All
the times I looked at you ... and
touched you ... and couldn't under-
stand why I ... I thought there
was something wrong with me ... I
loved you so much.

They look into each others' eyes. They begin to kiss and touch each other.

AVIGDOR
(through their kisses)
We'll go away. To another town. We can still study together - at night. Like with your father. Except you'll learn how to cook - you can sew buttons already ... We can get married. We'll have children. You'll be a real woman.

She pulls away from him. Looks at him, gravely.

YENTL
I am a real woman.

There's a sudden hammering on the door. Neither of them moves. More hammering. YENTL goes to the door, opens it. The LANDLORD's there - half-undressed, bleary-eyed.

LANDLORD
For God's sake, keep the noise down, will you! There's people trying to sleep! You want to argue Talmud at the top of your voices, go back to the Yeshiva!

He storms back down the corridor. YENTL closes the door. A pause.

AVIGDOR
Hadaas. What about Hadaas?

YENTL
You'll have to go back to Bechev. I'll give you a statement that the marriage was never consummated. You'll give it to the rabbis. We'll be divorced. It's easy. We were never married.

AVIGDOR
But the rabbis witnessed it ...

YENTL
Witnessed what? A marriage between two women? It's null and void.

AVIGDOR
Nevertheless, according to the divorce procedures in Eben Ezer, once the rabbis --

YENTL
According to God, Avigdor, there was no marriage.

AVIGDOR
This is crazy! I'm arguing Talmud with a woman!

YENTL
It's not for the first time, Avigdor.

A strange, empty pause.

AVIGDOR
And then what?

YENTL
And then - according to plan - you can marry her. I imagine her parents will be only too --

AVIGDOR
I can't marry her ...

YENTL
She's the only one for you. You said so. It's meant to be. It's Fate.

AVIGDOR
We make our own fate.
(then - clutching at straws)
Maybe there's something else we can do! Maybe there's a legal judgment on this! A tractate, perhaps, in the Code of Law! We'll look it up ...

YENTL
There's no book with this in, Avigdor. Not everything is written.

He turns to her, looks into her eyes.

AVIGDOR
What's to become of you, Yentl?

117 EXT. INN LATER DAY

YENTL comes out of the inn. We see some SOLDIERS on horseback. Many PEOPLE, coming and going. AVIGDOR is putting his suitcase onto the wagon, then turns to YENTL. He reaches to caress her face but pulls his hand back.

AVIGDOR
Your beard ... I suppose it'll never grow now.
(they both smile)
How could I have been so blind?

She would like to kiss him but can't. Several BYSTANDERS begin to notice their odd behaviour.

AVIGDOR
I'll worry about you.

YENTL
(hands him a letter)
The divorce papers -- and a note for Hadaas. Would you give it to her for me, please?

AVIGDOR takes it, puts it in his pocket.

AVIGDOR
Don't worry, Anshel.

YENTL
Yentl.

AVIGDOR
Which one are you?

YENTL
I'm both.

AVIGDOR grabs her and kisses her.

AVIGDOR
I'll miss you both terribly!

YENTL
(holding on a little too tightly)
I'll miss you, too, Avigdor.

AVIGDOR breaks away and gets into the wagon. He drives off quickly as the TWO SOLDIERS in the background stare in disbelief. YENTL stands watching him for a long time. As we see him growing smaller in the distance, we hear:

YENTL (V.O.)
My beloved Avigdor. After many months your letter finally found me ... I hope this one finds you ...

MIX TO

118 INT. A ROOM NIGHT

YENTL is writing at a desk by candlelight.

YENTL (V.O.)
Since we said goodbye, I've prayed that - despite all the pain I've

YENTL (V.O.) (Cont)
given - some good would somehow come out of it ...

MIX TO

119 INT. VISHKOWERS' HOUSE DAY

AVIGDOR is reading the letter, deeply moved. Beside him is HADAAS, with their BABY in her arms.

YENTL (V.O.)
... and now you tell me it has. Well if we do have to turn the world upside down to do that, maybe it's because the world needs it now and then.

As for me, I'm going to a new life in a new place, where I hear things are different. Anyway, I hope so.

Take care of yourself and Hadaas. Our wonderful Hadaas. Help her with her studies. She has great promise. And, remember, I will love you both always. Yentl.
(beat)
P.S. I send my blessing to your son, Anshel. One day, when he's as tall as a tree, maybe you'll tell him how he got his name.

MIX TO

120 A SHIP AT SEA DAY

Open on a CLEAR, BLUE SKY. Pan down to see YENTL, now dressed as a woman, among EMIGRANTS huddled with their belongings on deck.

IT ALL BEGAN THE DAY I FOUND
THAT FROM MY WINDOW I COULD SEE A PIECE
OF SKY
I STEPPED OUTSIDE AND LOOKED AROUND
I NEVER DREAMED IT WAS SO WIDE OR EVEN
HALF AS HIGH
I TOOK A CHANCE AND TRIED MY WINGS ...

Papa, can you hear me?

AND EVEN THOUGH I KNEW AT ANY MOMENT
I COULD FALL ...

Papa, are you near me?

I FELT THE MOST AMAZING THINGS?

YENTL (Cont)
Papa, can you see me?

THE THINGS YOU CAN'T IMAGINE IF YOU'VE
NEVER FLOWN AT ALL
THOUGH ITS SAFER TO STAY ON THE GROUND
SOMETIMES WHERE DANGER LIES, THERE THE
SWEETEST OF PLEASURES ARE FOUND,
NO MATTER WHERE I GO - THERE'LL BE
MEM'RIES THAT TUG AT MY SLEEVE,
AND THERE WILL ALSO BE MORE TO QUESTION
AND MORE TO BELIEVE,
OH, TELL ME WHERE - WHERE IS SOMEONE WHO
WILL TURN TO LOOK AT ME?
AND WANT TO SHARE MY EV'RY SWEET-
IMAGINED POSSIBILITY.

THE MORE I LIVE - THE MORE I LEARN
THE MORE I LEARN - THE MORE I REALIZE THE
LESS I KNOW
EACH STEP I TAKE - EACH PAGE I TURN
EACH MILE I TRAVEL ONLY MEANS THE MORE
I HAVE TO GO.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH WANTING MORE?
IF YOU CAN FLY - THEN SOAR
WITH ALL THERE IS WHY SETTLE FOR
JUST A PIECE OF SKY?

She looks up. Smiles. A BIRD is swooping and circling above. Stay on the Bird, as we hear:

YENTL (V.O.)
Papa I can hear you ...
Papa I can see you ...
Papa I can feel you ...
Papa - watch me fly.

END